
Achieving the Impossible:

AMERICA'S “THING”

An address by
Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey
October 4, 1967

The following speech was delivered by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey when he swore in Brent K. Ashabranner as deputy director of the Peace Corps on Oct. 4, 1967, in a ceremony at the State Department. Mr. Humphrey, stirred by the occasion, discarded his brief prepared talk and gave instead an ardent affirmation of the American experience, propounding what he believes to be the role of the Peace Corps in helping define and shape our national character. Mr. Humphrey, who is chairman of the Peace Corps National Advisory Council, described the Peace Corps as "the finest living expression of the purpose and the meaning of America that has ever been put to the field and to the test." This is an abridged version of that speech.

We hear a lot nowadays about people having a "thing," a thing to do. Doing their thing is a very personal matter to them, and often very compelling. There have been times in all of our lives when each of us felt there was just something we were compelled to do, that there was a commitment we needed to make, a decision that had to be ours. We had to support a program or a policy or an organization.

Now, I have had a few of those feelings myself, a few of those "things" in my life—causes or ideas that have meant a great deal to me. One of those causes is the fact of the existence of the Peace Corps.

ORIGIN OF THE PEACE CORPS

It was something that seemed to make a lot of sense to me a long time ago. And because I felt deeply about it, because others did, it became a reality.

We started to talk about the idea of some form of national service, such as the Peace Corps. And out of that general talk, from the public platform, came speeches in the Senate and the House of Representatives, and out of that came a proposal, which was not accepted at first. There were cynics, as there always are, who thought that it was a pie-in-the-sky, foolish idea. There were others who thought it was just another way for young men to escape their responsibilities to the military service.

I have often thought about my own experience in the 1959-1960 period when I had some illusions of grandeur, and I decided I would enter some Presidential primaries. Out of the cross fire of debate between the very able and brilliant young Senator named John Kennedy and another Senator called Hubert Humphrey, we developed the idea of the Peace Corps. It did not just come out of some proposal that was conceived in a dark room with a magic pencil, on magic or mystical paper. It came out of the hard experience of platform debate.

When John Kennedy became President of the United States, he called me to the White House one day and said, "Hubert, I want to take the proposal of yours that we talked about a great deal in the primaries, and I want to send it up to Congress. We want to make it the law of the land."

The proposal was introduced in 1959. It was debated in 1960. It was reintroduced as an Administration proposal in 1961. And the then President of the United States gave me the high honor of introducing that bill as an Administration bill. The chairman

of the Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. J. William Fulbright, gave me the high honor of holding the hearings. And the Majority Leader, Sen. Mike Mansfield, gave me the high honor of managing the bill on the floor of the Senate. Those were very happy days.

But I want you to know that it did not come easily. Practically everybody praises the Peace Corps now. Did you ever take a look at the votes on the amendments to the Peace Corps proposal when we were debating it in the Congress of the United States? Have you ever read all the speeches? You will find that it wasn't easy. But it did come about. And it came about because there were people who cared, and people who had ideas, commitments and feelings.

To put it in the language that I started out with, our "thing" is the knowledge deep within our marrow, or seared into our soul, that to live in prosperity while others live in deprivation is basically wrong, and that we have a responsibility to help the less fortunate lift themselves.

This is what is behind the poverty program at home and the Peace Corps program abroad. I think the greatest testimonial to our moral fiber, moral stature and moral commitment is that at a time when we are rich, affluent and powerful, we are also deeply concerned about the weak, the sick, the illiterate, the poor, the unfortunate and the despairing.

We decided to be braver, more courageous. We decided to do the better thing, namely to try to get at the root causes of the poverty which afflicts so many of the people of this nation, even though they are but a small minority of the total population.

NEW VOICES OF ISOLATIONISM

We have had exactly the same commitment overseas. We have a number of people today in America who say, "Why do we want to be involved in all this going on overseas?" There is a growing attitude among certain people in this country, and in certain circles, that we again ought to remove ourselves from the world. They are quite ready to say, "Stop the world, I want to get off." But there are a number of people today who say, "Well, do we have to take on the burdens of this world?"

I think it is fair to say that America could literally withdraw from any responsibility in the world today and have a 10-year "lost week end"—literally live it up, as we say, just having the time of our lives. At the end of that decade we would find out whether there would be anything left here or abroad that you could call freedom or social justice.

There are those now, even in this generation, who fail to remember or to have learned the lessons of the 1920's and the 1930's, when that is exactly what we did. We closed our mind, closed our heart, closed our purse, closed our thinking to the rest of the world. And we soon closed up our banks, lost our

farms and businesses and lost our self-respect. That happened once, in my lifetime. I see the seeds of it beginning to grow again in this part of my lifetime.

The excuse for it is, "Well, we are involved in struggle and war. Therefore, I am disenchanted. I don't like it; it is a dirty business."

That is sheer rationalization with very poor evidence. What is really going on is that some people just do not want to be bothered with the problems of other people. They prefer to take it easy.

THE REAL PEACEMAKERS

I should like to remind you that those who really are interested in peace—the peacemakers, not the peace-talkers or the peace-walkers—are the ones who take time to help people live a good life. The peacemakers are the Peace Corps Volunteers. They are the Community Action group. They are the people who have the courage to go into the ghetto, the urban slum, and help people find a new life. They are the people who have the courage to go to faraway places with a Foreign Aid program, or a Peace Corps program, or a program of some voluntary agency, and help build, help in the process of nation-building.

Pope Paul VI said in his recent message to the United Nations that development is the new name for peace. President John Kennedy, speaking at American University about four years ago, before the nuclear test-ban treaty, said to young and old alike that peace is not passive but active. Peace is more than the absence of war. I only paraphrase it now: Peace is development, peace is growth, peace at times is even turmoil in the process of growth. Peace is the defense of one's independence and one's freedom.

There is no instant peace, no instant character, no instant way to build anything that is really worthwhile. If anybody should know that, it is the Peace Corps Volunteers.

We have our work cut out for us: to stem the tide of the rebirth of isolationism in America. They won't call it isolationism. They have new names for it. But isolationism simply means the withdrawal from responsibility.

BURDENS OF LEADERSHIP

We have people who want the badge and title of leader, but none of the burdens, the duties and the responsibilities that come with it. Leadership gives you no privilege. Leadership gives you an opportunity to serve, and frequently to serve without recognition, or surely, without appreciation. It gives you heavy burdens and many difficult duties.

For individuals or nations who do not want to have that kind of leadership role, there is only one thing to do: Back away from it, and let somebody else take over. In the world there are those

who are willing to take over; make no mistake about it. There are plenty of people. There are ideologies, forms of government, social systems that are perfectly willing to take over the role of leader.

WORKING ALONGSIDE OTHERS

* To be a leader does not necessarily mean that you have to be a domineering force. The real test of leadership is the capacity to persuade and convince others to do for themselves what they ought to do for themselves. Then, finally, if they are unable to do it alone for themselves, you help them. I think that is what the Peace Corps does. It seems to teach people to do for themselves what they really want to do for themselves, and what they know they ought to do for themselves. But where they find it impossible to do it alone, the Peace Corps Volunteer says, "I am here to help. I stand alongside of you, not as your supervisor, not as your commander, but as your partner, and as your co-operator."

PURPOSES OF GOVERNMENT

We Americans have a belief that justice and human dignity should be the blessings of every man, not just of a chosen few. I really believe that.

As a student, a professor and a practitioner of government, I believe with Thomas Jefferson that the only legitimate objective of government is the health, the education and the well-being of people. That is the whole purpose. That is why I believe in the Peace Corps. It serves the highest objectives and purposes of government.

Our commitment, or our "thing," is helping our fellow man in the huts and the villages of half the globe—as John Kennedy pledged us—not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek his vote, but because it is right.

THE BASIS OF DEMOCRACY

When I used to lecture in American government, I would have my students do what all students like to do, namely, put their books under the desk, or behind the chair, for the first three or four weeks. I would say, "Listen, let's not read anything about the textbook stuff—you can read that not on my time but on yours. I want to ask you a simple question. Why democracy? Why should a man have a right to vote? Why should he have the right to govern himself? Maybe he won't vote right. I have seen several elections where I am sure he did not vote right. Why should he have the right to self-government? I have seen him govern himself very poorly, at least from my point of view. Why?"

Or better yet I would say, "Well, define democracy for me." Generally, the student, just fresh out of high school, with high

honors, the upper 10 per cent of his or her class, would say, "Professor, I think I know. Democracy—how do we define it? Well, it is the Constitution, it is the rights, privileges and duties; it is the right to vote, free press, freedom of association."

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF MAN

I would say, "Well, now, what makes you think all that is so good? I happen to think it is, but why do you think it is right and good?" Then, we would have about a week's discussion on that. Finally, when we boiled it down, I would come back to them and say, "Isn't the real basic reason for the right of man to govern himself the spiritual quality of man?"

This is a matter of faith and belief. Some people do not agree with this. But I happen to believe that man is endowed by his Creator—however you define that—with certain inalienable rights, not given by the Congress, not given by the Founding Fathers, not given by the Chamber of Commerce or the AFL-CIO, but rights that he is born with: of life, of liberty and of the pursuit of happiness. I happen to believe that man was created in the image of his Maker, and as such he has a spark that we call the soul and the spirit. No one has a right to either subdue that soul or that spirit or to control it without his consent.

In other words, I believe that the whole basis of democracy is in a very real sense spiritual, and not political.

I believe, if that is the case, that social justice takes on real meaning. Not just the meaning of pragmatism, not just because it is maybe a little better because it works out better, but because man is entitled to respect. Human dignity does not come by the way people conduct themselves; sometimes they do not act very dignified. The whole belief in human equality and human dignity is predicated on a spiritual concept of man's relationship to his Maker, man's relationship to nature, man's relationship to his God. That is the fundamental bedrock basis of the democratic system.

That is why when you work with people to help people help themselves, to see that every man shall have his chance and that he will be able to make the most out of his life, you are doing what you were really born to do, and you are doing the best thing that you could possibly do.

So you can see why everybody in the Peace Corps is concerned and interested. I think this is what our Peace Corps is doing. I think it is the finest living expression of the purpose and the meaning of America that has ever been put to the field and to the test. It really exemplifies the qualities of first-class citizenship.

THE GOOD NEWS OF AMERICAN YOUTH

I want to hold up both arms and say that the good news for America and for the world is that so many of our young people

feel compelled by some inner force to do this right thing and to do it now.

I was in my home city of Minneapolis this week end, and I read articles on some of our young people that were anything but pleasing to me. I did not think it showed the best side of them. Yet on that same Sunday, every fraternity of every college in the Twin City area had gone out to do a civic project, either in a community house, a settlement house, an old person's home or a hospital. My own son was out all day washing windows. They were not getting paid for it. Every one of them, once a week, has a responsibility to help somebody else.

This came out of some discussions we had a year ago, when I visited with some of our young fraternity boys. I said, "Listen, you guys live pretty good. Do you ever find out how anybody else lives? Why don't you, instead of just having house parties, take this enthusiasm you have, this energy, and share it with people who have all too little of the good life? Why don't you find the sick, the old, the needy and the crippled and offer some help? Why don't you find some students who need tutorial work and share your talents?"

And they are doing it. But nobody gives them a pat on the back.

The Peace Corps is good news too. I know that much of it is known. But I know so much about what you do, and how little of it is really known by the public. The lives that you save, the people that you heal, the illiterate that you have taught, the communities that you have helped develop. What a wonderful picture this is! The American people ought to know this is what we are doing, because the American people are becoming disillusioned, disappointed—constantly reading about what seem to be our failures, constantly hearing about what seems to be our lack of moral quality.

One of the items of good news is that right now the Peace Corps is the largest single employer of new American college graduates. That is great, good news. I think that news ought to be spread around the world, that the men and women of our universities volunteer by the thousands to help somebody else. They are not just self-indulgent people. I guess you know better than I do that 20 to 25 per cent of the graduating seniors in some of our colleges and universities have applied for the Peace Corps, and that about 40,000 young people will apply this year alone. They are not going to get rich monetarily out of it. It is not going to be luxury living.

THE VOICE OF AMERICA

There could be assignments that are far more comfortable, far more profitable and secure. So when young people turn right around and say "yes," rather than "no," say, "yes, we will take up the challenge," that means something to me. It means some-

thing to me as a citizen, and it means a lot to me as Vice President, because it says a great deal about America. That is the voice of America that I want the world to hear. The whole idea of the Peace Corps is something that says "yes." It is an affirmative proposition.

I get accused around this city of being an optimist. I am an optimist because I think I have a lot of evidence on my side.

HOW AMERICA ACHIEVED GREATNESS

I don't think that the United States is what it is today because it had a lot of fools being its leaders, or because American business was corrupt, or because American labor was filled with goons, or because the universities were filled with Communists.

I think that basically we are what we are because we have had the willingness to experiment. When something didn't work we cast it aside; we have not had a doctrinaire, dogmatic approach. We have had a great, abiding faith in our capacity to meet the problems before us, to experiment, to try and try again, and above all to have tremendous confidence in our capacity to do what we needed to do. We did not end up where we are in comparison to the rest of the world by being a constant failure. The sum total of the United States is not the aggregate total of failures.

You in the Peace Corps know what that means. When a Volunteer goes into a faraway place, into a strange land, and sees the almost superhuman task that lies before him, if that Volunteer wasn't an individual of affirmation and advocacy, of belief and faith, he would fold up and go home. The whole idea of the Peace Corps is something that says "yes." It is totally, naturally, wholeheartedly and healthily an affirmation.

PEACE CORPS BENEFITS TO AMERICA

I have seen the work of the Peace Corps Volunteers in many countries. I have seen what the Peace Corps has done for America in America. I was looking over the speech that I delivered in the Senate when we presented the bill to authorize the Peace Corps. I said the Peace Corps will do more for America in America or as much for America in America as it will do for others in other parts of the world.

And it has, for it brings out the best in our own young people. It stands as a symbol and a reminder to all Americans of what we are and what America stands for. It brings back to this nation a host of mature leadership.

Volunteers returning from overseas are asking hard, penetrating questions when they come back home. This is your greatest strength—and can cause you some of the greatest difficulties. Some people do not like to have others ask questions back home. Volunteers have been polite guests overseas for

two years. At home, the returning Volunteer does not hesitate to speak out and to challenge old orthodoxies.

But I must say to those returnees: Do not expect people to put their loving arms around you and say, "Now that you sacrificed for us for two years, what can we offer you?" It will still be a scramble. You will have to prove yourself back home just exactly as you proved yourself abroad. In fact, it may be a little tougher back here.

Peace Corps Volunteers who return are injecting imagination and new energy into public service. They are becoming involved in some of our toughest, most difficult social problems, trying to find modern solutions. Fortunately, they are not afraid of roll-up-the-sleeves hard work. They are giving our country a lift by their spirit and their determination, and they are giving our country quite a bargain, too.

It is no small feat that the annual cost per Volunteer has declined from about \$9,000 in 1963 to just under \$7,400 in 1966. I do not think any other agency of government can make that claim. Every dollar that has been spent on the Peace Corps in services overseas has been well spent. Not another cent has been required for the new dividends that we are receiving here at home.

This year, the number of returned Volunteers will surpass for the first time the number in active service. From now on, the Peace Corps back home is going to show us quite a time.

MANPOWER NEEDS IN U.S.

We are short 171,000 teachers in this country. That is just for today. We are going to have another 100 million people in the United States by the year 2000. There is a question of where they are going to live, how they are going to live and who will teach them. About 50 per cent of the population is under 25 now, and 60 per cent of the population will be under 25 in the year 2000.

Our social-service organizations are having trouble just coping with the old problems, and finding new people to work on them. So, might I add, are our two major political parties, and all levels of government, business and labor.

America needs people with courage, idealism and experience. So it is no wonder that the Philadelphia Board of Education is seeking returned Volunteers for its schools and hiring them by mail from overseas.

No wonder cities hit by unrest this summer are going to the Peace Corps for more help.

New York State now has a full-time recruiter just to hire Peace Corps Volunteers for school systems and other agencies of the state government.

These young people are going to get into our national bloodstream. These are young men and women who have learned something about the world in which they live, have gone out to

help that world out of conviction, and have come back mature, ripened and improved in their sensitivity and their judgment. In a very real sense, they have had their internship on somebody else, and have come back fully graduated, experienced and developed. As these young people get into our national bloodstream, it will be the best infusion of talent, spirit and determination that we have had for many a generation.

The Peace Corps will blend again with the people from whom it sprung — and whom it never quite left — imparting new vigor, new promise and new conviction for Americans that this nation's "thing," or its commitment, was right in the first place, and that it is still worth doing — any time, anywhere.

WHAT AMERICA SHOULD STAND FOR

I want our country to be known for its teachers, its doctors, its social workers, its enterprisers and its workers, and not just for its weapons, its power, its wealth and its soldiers. I want the history books that my grandchildren will read to say that in this, the last third of the Twentieth Century, America was dedicated, as it has been throughout its history, with renewed vigor for nation-building.

I want us to be the real peacemakers — which does not mean to be either pacific or cowardly. They surely are not the same, nor should they be so interpreted. The kind of peacemaker I mean is an individual who is active, a builder and a creator, a sharer of his own talents, gifts and abundance with others. Above all, he shares himself.

I am convinced that the next 33 years will offer us greater opportunities than the past 200. I am convinced of this with every fiber of my being. I believe that the greatness, the incredible discoveries of science and technology, coupled with our sense of humanities, can really bring us along the path of democracy, far beyond where we are now.

EACH GENERATION'S OBLIGATION

No matter what we do, there will still be more to do. No matter how many injustices we are able to correct, there will still be some left for generations yet unborn. We have not created Utopia, nor shall we in our lifetime. But I am convinced of one thing: That you are unworthy of existence unless you can really say to yourself, if to no one else, that "I have added something to the well-being of somebody else besides myself."

I think every generation, and indeed every human being, has a sacred obligation, not only to conserve its heritage and its inheritance, but rather to invest it wisely, to use it prudently, and to add to it, so that it can pass it along, richer, better, stronger and clearer, to someone else.

I am one of those who believes that America still is essentially a moral and ethical nation in the highest meaning of those terms,

that it is a peace-loving nation, that it is a nation-building nation, that it is a nation of compassion and thereby reveals its strength; that it is a nation of charity and thereby reveals its highest purpose. I commend the Peace Corps, and all of its Volunteers, for setting a fine example of these highest aspirations of the American people.

DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE

The difference between a great people and an ordinary people is the willingness and the capacity to do the impossible. Some people say "it is impossible in our time to lift the level of existence on this globe." There are the professionals who tell us that "the race between population and resources makes it impossible." There are some people who say "it is impossible to envisage the day when we can have universal disarmament and general peace." There are those who say "it is impossible for the world to have law and order, an international law that is enforceable and workable."

I say that it is not impossible. The fact that some people say it is should be a challenge to us to make it come true.

The story of the United States of America, as one nation, is that what some people said could not be done was done: the opening of the West, the creation of a representative government, the extension of universal suffrage and a host of other things. Achieving the impossible became a hallmark of our national character. I want to make sure that we do not let down those who have walked before us, but rather that we reach out to a higher ground, and even to greater purposes.

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
SWEARING IN OF BRENT ASHABRANNER AS
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OCTOBER 4, 1967

WE HEAR A LOT NOWADAYS ABOUT PEOPLE HAVING A
"THING" TO DO. DOING THEIR "THING" IS VERY PERSONAL TO
THEM....VERY COMPELLING. I KNOW THAT IS "HIP"
LINGO -- BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND IT. IT COMES THROUGH
DESPITE THE BEARDS.

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES IN ALL OUR LIVES WHEN WE
JUST HAD TO DO OR SAY OR SUPPORT A CERTAIN THING.

L I HAVE HAD A FEW "THINGS" IN MY PUBLIC LIFE -- CAUSES
OR IDEAS WHICH MEANT A GREAT DEAL TO ME. ONE OF THEM

WAS MY PROPOSAL FOR THE PEACE CORPS, AND MY
LEGISLATION WHICH BROUGHT IT INTO BEING.

L I BELIEVE THIS COUNTRY -- THE AMERICAN PEOPLE --
HAVE A THING, AND PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS ARE DOING IT.

L OUR "THING" IS THE KNOWLEDGE DEEP WITHIN OUR
MARROW, THAT TO LIVE IN PROSPERITY WHILE OTHERS LIVE
IN DEPRIVATION IS WRONG -- AND THAT WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY
TO HELP THE LESS FORTUNATE LIFT THEMSELVES.

L OUR "THING" IS THE BELIEF THAT JUSTICE AND
HUMAN DIGNITY SHOULD BE THE BLESSINGS OF EVERY MAN --
AND NOT JUST THOSE OF A CHOSEN FEW.

L OUR "THING" IS HELPING OUR FELLOW MEN "IN THE
HUTS AND VILLAGES OF HALF THE GLOBE," AS JOHN KENNEDY
PLEGGED US, "NOT BECAUSE THE COMMUNISTS MAY BE DOING
IT, NOT BECAUSE WE SEEK THEIR VOTES, BUT BECAUSE IT IS

RIGHT."

I AM NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN THE
FREUDIAN OR OTHER EXPLANATIONS FOR OUR AMERICAN

"THING" -- ALTHOUGH I'VE HEARD MANY.

THE GOOD NEWS FOR AMERICA AND FOR THE WORLD,

IS THAT SO MANY OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE COMPELLED TO DO

THIS RIGHT THING -- AND DO IT NOW.

RIGHT NOW, THE PEACE CORPS IS THE LARGEST SINGLE
"EMPLOYER" OF NEW AMERICAN COLLEGE GRADUATES.

RIGHT NOW, UP TO 20 TO 25 PER CENT OF THE

GRADUATING SENIORS IN SOME OF OUR COLLEGES AND

UNIVERSITIES HAVE APPLIED TO THE PEACE CORPS. SOME

FORTY THOUSAND YOUNG PEOPLE WILL APPLY THIS YEAR

ALONE.

FOR MOST OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE, IT WOULD BE

EASY TO SAY "NO" AND TO TURN TO SOMETHING FAR MORE
^{Profitable}
COMFORTABLE AND SECURE.

↳ SO WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE TURN RIGHT AROUND AND SAY
"YES" -- "YES, WE'LL TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE" -- THAT
MEANS SOMETHING TO ME FOR WHAT IT SAYS ABOUT AMERICA.

↳ THE WHOLE IDEA OF THE PEACE CORPS IS SOMETHING
THAT SAYS "YES."

↳ IT IS TOTALLY, NATURALLY AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY
AN AFFIRMATION.

↳ I KNOW -- AND I HAVE SEEN FIRST-HAND -- WHAT
THE PEACE CORPS IS DOING IN REMOTE FIELDS AND
VILLAGES AROUND THE WORLD.

↳ I ALSO KNOW -- AND HAVE SEEN -- WHAT THE
PEACE CORPS HAS DONE FOR AMERICA IN AMERICA.

↳ IT NOT ONLY BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN OUR YOUNG
PEOPLE. IT STANDS AS A SYMBOL AND A REMINDER TO

ALL AMERICANS OF WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT AMERICA
STANDS FOR.

↳ FOR THOSE REASONS -- WHAT IT DOES FOR OTHERS;

WHAT IT DOES FOR US -- I AM NOT INTERESTED IN A
SMALL PEACE CORPS -- NOR IS PRESIDENT JOHNSON.

↳ I WANT TO SEE THE PEACE CORPS GROW RIGHT UP
TO THE POINT WHERE FURTHER SIZE COULD YIELD LITTLE MORE
OF LASTING VALUE.

↳ EVERY AMERICAN WHO CAN MEET PEACE CORPS STANDARDS
OUGHT TO HAVE A CHANCE. ↳ EVERY JOB THAT NEEDS TO BE
DONE OUGHT TO RECEIVE THE ANSWER, "YES, WE'LL TRY."

↳ YES, I THINK OUR PEOPLE WANT THE LARGEST,
STRONGEST OUTLET POSSIBLE FOR THE KIND OF PERSONAL
~~commitment~~
~~STATEMENT~~ THE PEACE CORPS REPRESENTS.

↳ I DON'T THINK THEY SEE IT AS A MATTER OF
GOVERNMENT POLICIES -- YES, EVEN THOSE WHO DON'T LIKE *all*
of those

THOSE POLICIES -- NEVERTHELESS CAN SHOULDER A
BURDEN ...CAN TEST THEMSELVES...AND CAN WORK FOR A
CAUSE THEY KNOW IS RIGHT.

L I THINK THERE IS ANOTHER BENEFIT WHICH OUR
COUNTRY IS GAINING FROM THE PEACE CORPS -- AND WE
ARE ONLY BEGINNING TO FEEL IT.

L VOLUNTEERS RETURNING FROM OVERSEAS ARE ASKING
HARD, PENETRATING QUESTIONS BACK HOME.

L THEY HAVE BEEN POLITE GUESTS OVERSEAS FOR TWO
YEARS; AT HOME, THEY DON'T HESITATE TO SPEAK OUT AND
TO CHALLENGE OLD ORTHODOXIES.

L THEY ARE INJECTING IMAGINATION AND NEW ENERGY INTO
PUBLIC SERVICE.

L THEY ARE BECOMING INVOLVED IN OUR TOUGHEST
SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

THEY ARE NOT AFRAID OF SLEEVES-UP HARD WORK.!

THEY ARE GIVING OUR COUNTRY QUITE A BARGAIN.

I THINK IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO HAVE A PEACE CORPS WHICH TURNS MONEY BACK TO THE FEDERAL TREASURY. THIS PAST YEAR, FOR EXAMPLE, IT WAS FIVE MILLION DOLLARS.

IT IS NO SMALL FEAT THAT ANNUAL COSTS PER VOLUNTEER HAVE DECLINED FROM ABOUT NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS IN 1963 TO JUST UNDER SEVENTY-FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS LAST YEAR.

BUT EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON THE PEACE CORPS HAD SERVICE OVERSEAS AS ITS OBJECTIVE.

NOT ANOTHER CENT HAS BEEN REQUIRED FOR THE NEW DIVIDENDS WE ARE NOW RECEIVING AT HOME.

THIS YEAR, THE NUMBER OF RETURNED VOLUNTEERS WILL SURPASS THE NUMBER IN ACTIVE SERVICE FOR THE FIRST TIME. FROM NOW ON, THE PEACE CORPS BACK HOME IS GOING

TO SHOW US QUITE A TIME,

WE ARE SHORT 171 THOUSAND TEACHERS IN THIS COUNTRY. OUR SOCIAL-SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE HAVING TROUBLE JUST COPING WITH OLD PROBLEMS, AND FINDING NEW PEOPLE -- AND SO, MIGHT I ADD, ARE OUR TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES. AND SO ARE ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT...AND BUSINESS...AND LABOR.

AMERICA NEEDS PEOPLE WITH COURAGE AND IDEALISM AND EXPERIENCE. NO WONDER THE PHILADELPHIA BOARD OF EDUCATION IS SEEKING RETURNED VOLUNTEERS FOR ITS SCHOOLS -- HIRING THEM BY MAIL FROM OVERSEAS.

NO WONDER CITIES HIT BY UNREST THIS SUMMER ARE GOING TO THE PEACE CORPS FOR MORE HELP.

NEW YORK STATE NOW HAS A FULL-TIME RECRUITER JUST TO HIRE VOLUNTEERS FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND OTHER AGENCIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE GOING TO GET INTO OUR
BLOOD STREAM.

AS THEY DO, IT WILL BE THE BEST INFUSION OF TALENT,
SPIRIT, AND DETERMINATION WE SHALL HAVE FELT IN YEARS.

FOR THOSE OF US WHO HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE
PEACE CORPS, IT WILL BE OUR PROUDEST HOUR, SEEING THE
IDEA COME HOME.

FOR THE PEACE CORPS WILL BLEND AGAIN WITH THE PEOPLE
FROM WHOM IT SPRUNG -- NEVER QUITE LEFT -- AND
RETURNED, IMPARTING NEW VIGOR, NEW PROMISE, AND NEW
CONVICTION FOR AMERICANS THAT THIS NATION'S "THING"
WAS RIGHT IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND IS STILL WORTH
DOING -- ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.

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VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
SWEARING-IN OF BRENT ASHABRANNER
AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS

EDITED TRANSCRIPT

October 4, 1967

Today I am going to take a little of your time to talk to you about the Peace Corps, to talk to you about our country and the mission of this Nation, and your mission as representatives of this Nation.

We hear a lot nowadays about people having a "thing" to do. Doing their "thing" is a very personal matter to them, and often very compelling. I guess this is what they call the "hip" lingo. But I think I can understand it.

There have been times in all of our lives when we felt there was something we just had to do, that there was a commitment we needed to make, a decision that had to be ours. We had to support a program or a policy or an organization.

Now, I have had a few of those feelings myself, a few of those "things" in my life--causes or ideas which have meant a great deal to me. One of them was my proposal for the Peace Corps and my legislation which brought it into being. This was something that seemed to make a lot of sense to me. And because I felt deeply about it, because others did, it became a reality.

At first it was just an idea, something we talked about. But out of that general talk came a proposal, which was rejected at first. There were the cynics, as there always are, who thought that it was pie in the sky. There were others who thought it was just another way for young men to escape their responsibilities to the military service.

And then, finally, there developed a greater interest in the proposal.

When John Kennedy became President of the United States, he called me to the White House one day and said, "Hubert, I want to take that proposal of yours that we talked about a great deal in the primaries, and I want to send it up to Congress. I want to make it the law of the land."

But I want you to know that final passage did not come easily, even though practically everybody praises the Peace Corps today. I believe that the American people today have a strong feeling about the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps volunteers.

To put it in the language that I started with, our "thing" is the knowledge deep within our marrow, seared into our soul, that to live in prosperity while others live in deprivation is wrong, and that we have a responsibility to help the less fortunate lift themselves.

This is what is behind the poverty program at home, and the Peace Corps program abroad. And I think the greatest testimonial to the moral fiber of this nation is that at a time when we are rich and powerful, we are also deeply concerned about the weak and the sick and the illiterate and the poor and the unfortunate and the despairing.

We could--as some people would have us do--just pretend that the problem of poverty does not exist. Or we could try to buy it off with a relief check which I call welfare-ism--checkbook compassion.

But we decided not to do that. We decided to do the better thing--to try to get at the root causes of the poverty which afflicts so many of the people of this nation and of the world.

We have a number of people in America today that say, "Why do we want to be involved in all this going on overseas?" And I am not just speaking about Vietnam. There is a growing attitude among certain people in this country, and in certain circles, that we ought to remove ourselves from the world.

I think it is fair to say that America could literally withdraw from all responsibility in the world today and have a ten-year lost weekend--literally live it up, as we say, just having the time of our lives. But at the end of that decade, I wonder whether there would be anything left here or abroad that you could call freedom or social justice.

There are those now even in my generation who fail to

remember the lessons of the 1920's and the 1930's, when that is exactly what we did. We closed our mind, closed our heart, closed our purse, closed our thinking to the rest of the world. And we soon closed up our banks, and lost our farms and businesses, lost our self-respect. That happened once, in my lifetime. And I see the seeds of it beginning to grow again.

The excuse for it is "Well, we are involved in struggle and war. And therefore I am disenchanted, I don't like it, it is a dirty business."

That is sheer rationalization.

What these people really mean is that they just do not want to be bothered with the problems of other people. They prefer to take it easy.

Those who really are interested in peace--those who are the peace-makers, not the peace-talkers or the peace-walkers--take time to help people live a good life.

The peace-makers are the Community Action groups. They are the people who have the courage to go to faraway places with a Foreign Aid program, or the Peace Corps, or an overseas program of some voluntary agency, and help in the process of nation-building.

Pope Paul said in his message to the United Nations that development is the new name for peace.

John Kennedy, speaking at American University some four years ago, just before the nuclear test-ban treaty, said that peace is not passive; peace is active. Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace is development, he said, peace is growth, peace at times is even turmoil in the process of growth. Peace is the defense of one's independence and one's freedom.

I am one of those who think it takes as long to build peace as it does to build a cathedral, and maybe longer--to build a nation, to create a family, to educate it and see it develop.

There aren't any instant peace solutions. And if anybody should know that, it is the Peace Corps volunteers.

I am pleased to see this group of volunteers because we have our work cut out for us--to stem the rebirth of isolationism in America.

We have people in this country who want the badge and title of leader, but none of the burdens and the duties and the responsibilities that go with it. As a matter of fact, all that leadership gives you is an opportunity to serve, frequently without recognition or appreciation. It gives you a robe of responsibility and no hope of comfort. It gives you heavy burdens, and many difficult duties.

If individuals or nations do not want that kind of leadership role, there is only one thing to do, and that is to back away from it

and let somebody else take it over. And there are those in the world today that are willing to take it over--make no mistake about it.

To be a leader does not mean that you have to be domineering. The real test of leadership is the capacity to persuade others to do for themselves what they ought to do for themselves. I think that is what the Peace Corps does.

But where a nation finds it impossible to do a job alone, the Peace Corps volunteer says, "I am here to help. I stand beside you, not as your supervisor, not as your commander, but as your partner and as your helper."

Our commitment--our "thing" is helping our fellow men "in the huts and the villages of half the globe"--as John Kennedy pledged us--"not because the Communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right."

In other words, I believe that the whole basis of democracy is in a very real sense spiritual, and not just political. And that is why when you work with people, helping people help themselves, you are doing the best thing that you could possibly do.

Now, I know there are many people who have other theories about what we ought to do and why we do the things we do. But I am not particularly interested in the Freudian and other explanations for our American "thing."

I think the good news for America and for the world is that so many of our young people feel compelled by some inner force to do the right thing and to do it now.

The good news is the Peace Corps--the lives that you save, the people you heal, the illiterates you have taught, the communities you have helped develop. What a wonderful picture this is. The American people ought to know this is what we are doing, because the American people are becoming disillusioned, disappointed--constantly reading about what seem to be our failures, constantly hearing about what seems to be our lack of moral quality.

One of the items of good news is that right now the Peace Corps is the largest single employer of new American college graduates.

I think that news ought to be spread around the world--that the men and women of our universities volunteer by the thousands to help somebody else. Right now 20 to 25 percent of the graduating seniors in some of our colleges and universities have applied for the Peace Corps. And some 40,000 young people will apply this year alone.

For most of these young people it would be easy just to say no. There are other jobs awaiting them--if you can pass the qualifications of being a Peace Corps volunteer, you can do all right any place else.

There are assignments that would be far more comfortable and far more profitable and secure. So when young people turn right around and say yes, we will take up the challenge, that means

something to me for what it says about America.

The whole idea of the Peace Corps is something that says yes. It is totally and wholeheartedly an affirmation.

I know--I have seen the work of the Peace Corps volunteers in many countries. I also know--and have seen--what the Peace Corps has done for America in America. It not only brings out the best in our young people, it stands as a symbol and a reminder to all Americans of what we are and what America stands for.

For those reasons--what it does for others and what it does for us--I am not interested in a small Peace Corps, nor is President Johnson interested in a small Peace Corps. I want to see the Peace Corps grow right up to the point where further size could yield little more of lasting value.

Every American who can meet Peace Corps standards ought to have a chance. Every job that needs to be done ought to receive the answer--yes, we will try.

I do not know how many jobs there are to undertake. But I know this--dollar for dollar you get more returns from the investment in the Peace Corps than from anything else we are doing as a government and as a country.

I think our people want the largest, strongest outlet possible for the kind of personal commitment that the Peace Corps represents.

I do not think they see it as a matter of government policies. Even those who do not like all of those policies nevertheless can shoulder

a burden, can test themselves, and can work for a cause that they know is right.

I think there is another benefit which our country is gaining from the Peace Corps, and we are only beginning to feel it.

Volunteers returning from overseas are asking hard, penetrating questions when they come back home. They have been polite guests overseas for two years. At home, they don't hesitate to speak out and to challenge old orthodoxies.

They are injecting imagination and new energy into public service. They are becoming involved in some of our toughest social problems--trying to find modern solutions.

Fortunately, they are not afraid of roll-up-the-sleeves hard work. They are giving our country a lift by their spirit and their determination, and they are giving our country quite a bargain, too.

I think it would be enough to have a Peace Corps which turns money back to the federal treasury. This year, for example, you turned back \$5 million.

It is no small feat that the annual costs per volunteer have declined from about \$9,000 in 1963 to just under \$7,400 last year.

And every dollar spent on the Peace Corps has been spent for services overseas. Not another cent has been required for the new dividends we are now receiving here at home.

This year, the number of returned volunteers will surpass for the first time the number in active service. From now on the Peace Corps back home is going to show us quite a time.

We are short of 171,000 teachers in this country, and that is a conservative figure.

Our social service organizations are having trouble just coping with the old problems and finding new people--and so, might I add, are our two major political parties. And so are all levels of government and business and labor.

America needs people with courage and idealism and experience. No wonder the Philadelphia Board of Education is seeking returned volunteers for its schools, and hiring them by mail from overseas.

No wonder cities hit by unrest this summer are going to the Peace Corps for more help.

New York State now has a full-time recruiter just to hire Peace Corps volunteers for school systems and other agencies throughout the state.

These young people are going to get into our national bloodstream. And as they do, it will be the best infusion of talent, spirit, and determination that we have had for years.

For those of us who have been a part of the Peace Corps, it will be our proudest hour to see the idea of the Peace Corps, which was our best export, come back as our best import.

For the Peace Corps will blend again with the people from whom it sprung--or should I say from which it never quite left--and returned, imparting new vigor, new promise, and new conviction for Americans that this Nation's "thing"--its commitment--was right in the first place, and that it is still worth doing--any time, anywhere.

I really believe that we can mark this out for our time.

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MEMORANDUM

THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

TO TED
From Jeff Antevil

October 17, 1967

[Oct 31] [✱]

Enclosed is the Plans for Progress speech. Ofield asks that you approve it as soon as possible so it can be forwarded to P. for P. for reproduction and distribution. Please call Ofield when it's ready to be picked up.

[Sept 12] [✱]

Also enclosed are the Presbyterian remarks. They are rather disorganized, but I think they held together pretty well up to page 13. I just cut it off there and resumed with the questions.

OK -
All type + to Julie
To John W.

CO Whitaker

[✱ These transcripts not enclosed when files were processed. Mar. 1972]

PEACE CORPS ~~NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL~~

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SWEARING-IN OF BRENT ASHABRANNER :
AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS :
-----X

Washington, D.C.

October 4, 1967

WARD & PAUL
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PEACE CORPS NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNSEL

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: SWEARING-IN OF BRENT ASHABRANNER :
: AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS :
: ----- X

International Conference Room,
Department of State,
Wednesday, October 4, 1967.
3:15 P.M.

MR. VAUGHN: Mr. Vice President, members of the
Peace Corps National Advisory Counsel, Mr. Ashabrunner Senior,
Junior, fellow believers -- we are deeply grateful to you, Mr.
Vice President, for making this occasion so exciting and making
the recognition of Brent Ashabrunner as the new Deputy Director
of the Peace Corps so significant.

May I say just a word about the nature of this man.

He has several special advantages. The first is that I
have never meet a foreigner who could pronounce his last name
-- which tends to keep many out of the press. As a young
man going through school, he earned his money by writing for
pulp magazines, and he was paid three cents a word. Since
assuming the job of Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, with
the voluminous correspondence and volunteers, it works out to

1 two cents a word. He is a man with long overseas experience.
2 He is poetic and sensitive and tough and red-headed.

3 We are very proud, Mr. Vice President, to bring
4 him on as an underpaid red-headed poet.

5 I think he characterizes or he epitomizes the senior
6 Peace Corps staff member in the second five years --; with
7 great overseas experience, volunteer oriented, and with a
8 poetic touch.

9 I think most of you know of the role of our Vice-
10 President in the establishment of the Peace Corps -- not only that
11 first idea, but the legislation to make it possible, and the
12 continuing support, enforcement and understanding that he has
13 brought to the Peace Corps.

14 He seldom makes a speech -- he averages about three
15 a day -- he seldom makes a speech that he does not refer
16 directly or indirectly to the Peace Corps.

17 I give you with greatest pride a man of peace and
18 a man of the Peace Corps, your Vice-President. (Applause)

19 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Will you please raise
20 your right hand. Place your hand on the Bible and repeat
21 after me.

22 I, Brent Ashabrunner, do solemnly swear that I will
23 support and defend the Constitution of the United States,
24 against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear
25 true faith and allegiance to the same, that I take this obli-

1 gation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of
2 evasion, that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties
3 of the office of which I am about to enter, so help me God.

4 MR. ASHABRANNER: I, Brent Ashabranner, do solemnly
5 swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the
6 United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic,
7 that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that
8 I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation
9 or purpose of evasion, that I will well and faithfully discharge
10 the duties of the office of which I am about to enter, so help
11 me God.

12 VICE-PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Congratulations.

13 (Applause.)

14 Our good friend Jack Vaughn your director, and the
15 very able and gifted and dedicated Director of the Peace Corps,
16 and our new Deputy, the gentleman that has earned through his
17 meritorious service the highest honors that any government can
18 pay him, who comes to us now as the Deputy Director of the
19 Peace Corps -- and I think I can pronounce your last name --
20 I hope I can, anyway, Brent -- Brent Ashabranner.

21 Any man with a middle name of Horatio ought to be
22 able to do that.

23 I am so pleased that we have had this opportunity, today,
24 in the presence of many of our compatriots and associates in
25 the Peace Corps, to have the swearing in in the State Department,

1 taking your oath of office in the presence of the most
2 illustrious of witnesses. And I want to wish you the very best,
3 and know that you will serve in your position with great
4 distinction.

5 I am particularly happy that your family can be here.
6 On an occasion like this it means so much to the family, and I
7 think it means so much to the principal, too, to have the family
8 present and looking on and seeing the ceremony, and to share
9 this happy hour with your associates.

10 So to your mother, your wife, and your daughters,
11 your family, I want to jointwith them in wishing you the very
12 best, and congratulating you.

13 I have before me sort of a thumbnail biographical
14 sketch of Mr. Ashabrunner. He has all sorts of good marks.
15 First, he was born in Okoahoma. And that he attended Oklahoma
16 State University. I spoke at Oklahoma State University, and
17 they were very nice. He served with the United States Navy,
18 and as has been indicated by Jack Vaughn, he was once a writer
19 for pulp magazines, as he called it -- three cents a word.
20 Imagine if I had only been paid two cents a word for all the
21 speeches I have made -- I would be one of the really rich men
22 of the Nation -- and more than willing to have shared much of
23 my income with all of those present. But they didn't pay me
24 that way. In fact, I think I might have been paid a little more
25 if I had said less.

1 But today I am going to take a little of your time,
2 a little of our time -- because I would like to think this is a
3 rather family occasion, to talk to you about the Peace Corps,
4 to talk to you about our country and the mission of this Nation,
5 and your mission as representatives of this Nation.

6 I asked some of your associates over in the Peace
7 Corps -- I said, now give me the kind of thrust that this
8 occasion ought to have -- how do we get with it. And the very
9 first thing I heard back from Mr. Vaughn and his staff -- well,
10 you ought to talk about the "thing." I guess that ~~that is~~ supposed
11 to be the present, current mood and temperature, and the jargon
12 of the younger generation.

13 We hear a lot nowadays about people having a thing,
14 a thing to do. Doing their thing is a very personal matter to
15 them, and often very compelling. I guess this lingo is what
16 they call sort of the hip lingo. But I think I can understand
17 it. It seems to come through quite clearly.

18 There have been times in all of our lives when each
19 of us felt there was just something we were compelled to do,
20 that there was a commitment we needed to make, there was a
21 decision that had to be ours. We had to support a program or
22 a policy or an organization.

23 Now, I have had a few of those feelings myself, a
24 few of those things in my life -- causes or ideas which have
25 meant everything to me. And at least meant a great deal to me.

1 And one of those causes is the fact of the existence of the
2 Peace Corps. It was something that seemed to make a lot of
3 sense to me a long time ago. And because I felt deeply about
4 it, because others did, it became a reality.

5 It was first just an idea, talked about. And might
6 I suggest that one of the great needs in this country is for
7 people who have ideas to talk about them. It is not good enough
8 just to meditate about them. You need to talk out loud. There
9 is a great deal of discussion these days about the need of a
10 dialog by people who do not want a dialog. We must talk to
11 one another -- not in a sense of self-righeousness, knowing
12 that we have the truth, but rather in a sense of humility,
13 searching for the truth.

14 Well, we started to talk about the idea of some form
15 of national service, such as the Peace Corps. And out of that
16 genefal talk, from the public platform, came so much speeches
17 in the Senate and the House of Representatives, and out of that
18 came a proposal, which was not accepted at first -- in fact it
19 was rejected. There were the cynics, as there always are,
20 who thought that it was a pie in the sky foolish idea. There
21 were others who thought it was just another way for young men
22 to escape their responsibilities to the military service. I
23 remember those who said it was nothing but a draft-dodging
24 proposal. Those are the ones that never took time to read it.
25 And they generally have the most to say about some things.

1 And then finally there became a greater interest in
2 the proposal.

3 I have often thought about my own experience in
4 the 1959-1960 period, when I had some illusions of grandeur,
5 I am sure, and I decided I would enter some presidential
6 primaries. I think I should confide in you that I never really
7 win -- which is exactly what my campaign manager told me was
8 one of the great weaknesses of my presentation. (Laughter)
9 But I was a man of conviction, and I still am, and I felt sure
10 that one thing could happen. That if we traveled around this
11 country and spoke and talked and argued and debated, that we
12 would establish a sort of a frame of reference in which the
13 issues of the day would be discussed. We would develop a
14 political and social environment and attitude and atmosphere.
15 And out of that crossfire of debate between the very able and
16 brilliant young Senator called John Kennedy, and another Senator
17 called Hubert Humphrey, we developed the idea of the Peace
18 Corps. It did not come out of some just proposal that was
19 conceived in a dark room with a sort of a magic pencil, on
20 magic or mystical paper. It came out of the hard experience
21 of platform debate.

22 And when John Kennedy became President of the United
23 States, he called me to the White House one day and said,
24 "Hubert, I want to take that proposal of yours that we talked
25 about a great deal in the primaries, and I want to send it up

1 to Congress, we want to make it the law of the land." The
2 proposal was introduced in 1959. It was debated in 1960. It
3 was re-introduced as an Administration proposal in 1961. And
4 the then President of the United States gave me the high honor
5 of introducing that bill as an Administration bill. And the
6 Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Fulbright,
7 gave me the high honor of holding the hearings. And the
8 majority leader, Mr. Mansfield, gave me the high Honor of
9 managing the bill on the floor of the Senate. These were very
10 happy days.

11 But I want you to know that it did not come easily.
12 Practically everybody praises the Peace Corps now. Did you
13 ever take a look at the votes on the amendments to the Peace
14 Corps proposal, when we were debating it in the Congress of
15 the United States? Have you ever read all the speeches? If
16 you have, you are a a glutton for punishment. But some of you
17 have, out of the sheer desire to do research. You will find
18 that it wasn't easy, but it did come about. And it came about
19 because there were people that cared, and people that had ideas
20 and commitments and feelings.

21 Well, you know, I believe that this country and the
22 American people have very strong feelings about a number of
23 things. And I think they have a very strong feeling about
24 the role of the United States in a troubled world. And I
25 believe that the American people have a strong feeling about

1 the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps volunteers.

2 To put it in the language that I started out with,
3 our thing is the knowledge deep within our marrow, or seared
4 into our soul, that to live in prosperity while others live
5 in deprivations is basically wrong, and that we have a responsi-
6 bility to help the less fortunate lift themselves.

7 Now, this is what is behind the Poverty Program at
8 home, and the Peace Corps Program abroad. And I think the greatest
9 testimonial to the moral fiber of this Nation, which many people
10 dispute as a fact, but which I proclaim as a fact -- the
11 greatest testimonial to our moral fiber and moral stature and
12 moral commitment is that at a time that we are rich and affluent
13 and powerful, and the majority of the American people are that
14 way, and this Nation is that way, we are also deeply concerned
15 about the weak and the sick and the illiterate and the poor
16 and the unfortunate and the despairing.

17 Now, we could literally cover it over for a while,
18 and we could, as some people would have us do, just pretend that
19 the problem of poverty does not exist, or if it does exist,
20 buy it off by a relief check -- what I call welfare-ism --
21 checkbook compassion.

22 We could do that. But we decided not to do that.
23 We decided to be braver, more courageous, we decided to do the
24 better thing, namely, to try to get at the root causes of the
25 poverty which afflicts so many of the people of this Nation, even

1 though that many is but a small minority of the total
2 population.

3 We have had exactly the same commitment overseas.
4 We have a number of people today in America that say "What do
5 we want to be involved in all this going on overseas." And
6 by the way, I am not just speaking about Vietnam. I think it
7 is maybe time that we spread this on the record. I said I would
8 speak to you quite freely, and I am about to. I do not pay
9 much attention to what is down here. You notice there are always
10 two speeches -- one that I bring and one that I give. I give
11 both of them -- that is why they run a little long.

12 Many people today seem to feel that the disenchant-
13 ment with American policy is strictly about Southeast Asia. I
14 submit that is not the case. There is a growing attitude
15 among certain people in this country, and in certain circles,
16 that we again ought to remove ourselves from the world -- they
17 are not quite ready to say stop the world, I want to get off,
18 because somebody is apt to ask them to be a recruit for the
19 lunar flight, and they do not want to do that, either. But
20 there are a number of people today that say "Well, do we have
21 to take on the burdens of this world?" That is why the cut
22 foreign aid, that is why there is a feeling that the programs
23 of foreign aid ought to be cut back, and that they have not been
24 working. It is not that they have not been working. It is
25 just that some people do not want to carry that much of a load,

1 because they would prefer to live it up.

2 I think it is fair to say that America could
3 literally withdraw from any responsibility in the world today
4 and have a ten-year lost weekend -- literally live it up, as
5 we say, just having the time of our lives. And at the end of
6 that decade, find out whether there was anything left here or
7 abroad that you could call freedom or social justice.

8 And there are those now even in this generation that
9 I look at that fail to remember or to have learned the lessons
10 of the 1920's and the 1930's, when that is exactly what we did.
11 We closed our mind, closed our heart, closed our purse, closed
12 our thinking to the rest of the world. And we soon closed up
13 our banks, and lost our farms and businesses, lost our self-
14 respect. That happened once, in my lifetime. And I see the
15 seeds of it beginning to grow again in this part of my lifetime.

16 The excuse for it is "Well, we are involved in
17 struggle and war. And therefore I am disenchanted, I don't
18 like it, it is a dirty business."

19 That is a sheer rationalization with very poor
20 evidence.

21 What is really going on is that some people just do
22 not want to be bothered with the problems of other people. They
23 prefer to take it easy.

24 Well, I should like to remind you that those who
25 really are interested in peace, and who really are the peace-

1 makers, not the peace-talkers, or the peace-walkers -- the peace-
 2 makers are the ones who take time to help people live a good
 3 life. The peace-makers are the Peace Corps volunteers. They
 4 are the Community Action group. They are the people that have
 5 the courage to go into the ghetto of the urban slum and help
 6 people find a new life. And they are the people that have the
 7 courage to go to faraway places with a Foreign Aid program,
 8 or a Peace Corps program, or a volunteer program of some voluntary
 9 agency, and help build, help in the process of nation-building.

10 Pope Paul said in his message to the United Nations,
 11 when he was here that the -- that development is the new name
 12 for peace. Development is the new name for peace.

13 John Kennedy speaking at American University some
 14 four years ago, just before the nuclear test-ban treaty, said
 15 to young and old alike, that peace is not passive, peace is
 16 active. Peace is more than the absence of war. And I only
 17 paraphrase it now. Peace is development, peace is growth, peace
 18 at times is even turmoil in the process of growth. Peace is
 19 the defense of one's independence and one's freedom.

20 So I think there needs to be some re-thinking of what
 21 we mean by peace, and what we mean by the work of peace.

22 The Scriptures say blessed are the peacemakers. And
 23 I am one of those that thinks that it takes as long to make
 24 peace as it does to build a cathedral, and maybe longer -- to
 25 build a Nation, to create a family, to educate it, and see it

1 develop.

2 There aren't any instant peace solutions. There is
3 instant coffee and instant tea, and a few other instant things.
4 But there is no instant peace, no instant character, no instant
5 way to build anything that is really worthwhile.

6 And if anybody should know that, that is the Peace
7 Corps's volunteers.

8 I am pleased to see this group of volunteers, and this
9 group of associates in this work, because we have our work cut
10 out for us -- to stem the tide of the rebirth if isolationism in
11 America. They won't call it isolationism, any more than some
12 of the Fascist movements abroad are willing to call it Fascism
13 or Nazi-ism. They have new names for them. But isolationism
14 simply means the withdrawal from responsibility.

15 We have people who want the badge and title of
16 leader, but want none of the burdens and the duties and
17 the responsibilities that come with it. And I am one of
18 those, I am sure you are, that knows, or at least believes, that
19 leadership gives you no privilege, not a bit. As a matter of
20 fact, all that leadership gives you is an opportunity to serve,
21 and frequently to serve without recognition, or surely without
22 appreciation. It gives you a robe of responsibility and no
23 hope of comfort. It gives you heavy burdens, and many difficult
24 duties. And for individuals or nations, if you do not want
25 to have that kind of leadership role, there is only one thing to

1 do, and that is to back away from it, and let somebody else
2 take it over. And in the world there are those that are willing
3 to take it over -- make no mistake about it. There are plenty
4 of people. There are ideologies, forms of government, social
5 systems that are perfectly willing to take over the role of
6 leader.

7 Now, to be a leader does not necessarily mean that
8 you have to be a domineering force. The real test of leader-
9 ship is the capacity to persuade and convince others to do for
10 themselves what they ought to do for themselves. And then finally,
11 if they are unable to do it alone for themselves, you help them.
12 I think that is what the Peace Corps does. It seems to teach
13 people to do for themselves what they really want to do for
14 themselves, and what they know they ought to do for themselves.

15 But where they find it impossible to do it alone,
16 the Peace Corps volunteer says, "I am here to help, I stand
17 alongside of you, not as your supervisor, not as your commander,
18 but as your partner, and as your cooperator."

19 You see, we Americans have a belief that justice and
20 human dignity should be blessings of every man -- and not
21 just those of a chosen few. I really believe that.

22 As a student and a professor and a practitioner of
23 government, I believe with Thomas Jefferson that the only
24 legitimate objective of government is the health, the education,
25 and the well-being of people. That is the whole purpose.

1 And that is why I believe in the Peace Corps. It serves the
2 highest objectives and purposes of government.

3 Our commitment or our thing is helping our fellow men
4 in the huts and the villages of half the globe -- as John Kennedy
5 pledged us -- not because the Communists may be doing it, not
6 because we seek this votes, but because it is right. Because
7 it is right.

8 Oh, I have served so long -- I served sixteen years
9 in the Senate of the United States, and many a time I saw a good
10 measure passed only because somebody could get up and use what
11 I call the politics of fear, saying if we do not do this, the
12 Communists will take us over, or if we do not do this, the
13 Communists sill do it.

14 But how much more purposeful and meaningful it is, and
15 how much more noble it is to do it because it is the right
16 thing to do -- not because you are afraid that somebody is going
17 to be the dominating force in the world, but rather because it
18 is right.

19 You see, when I used to lecture in American Government,
20 I would have my students do what all students like to do, namely,
21 put their books under the desk, or behind the chair, for the
22 first three or four weeks. I would say, "Listen, let's not
23 read anything about the textbook stuff -- you can read that not
24 on my time, but on yours. I want to ask you a simple question.
25 Why democracy? Why should a man have a right to vote? Why

1 should he have the right to govern himself? He maybe won't
2 vote right. I have seen several elections where I am sure
3 he did not vote right. (Laughter)

4 "Why should he have the right to self-government? I
5 have seen him govern himself very poorly, at least from my
6 point of view. Why?" Or better yet I would say, "Well,
7 define for me democracy." And generally the student just
8 fresh right out of high school, with high honors, the upper
9 10 per cent of his or her class, would say, "Professor, I
10 think I know. Democracy -- how do we define it. Well, it is
11 the Constitution, it is the rights and privileges and duties,
12 it is the right to vote, free press, freedom of association."

13 I would say, "Well, now, what makes you think all that
14 is so good? I happen to think it is, but why do you think it
15 is right and good?"

16 And then I would get, 'we would have about a week dis-
17 cussion on that.

18 And finally when we boil it down, I would come back
19 to them and say, "Isn't this the real basic reason for the
20 right of man to govern himself, is the fact that -- the
21 spiritual quality of man?"

22 Now, this is a matter of faith and belief. Some
23 people do not agree with this. But I happen to believe that
24 man is endowed by his Creator, however you define that -- is
25 endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights -- not

1 given by the Congress, not rights given by the Founding
2 Fathers, not rights given by the Chamber of Commerce or the
3 AFL-CIO. But rights that he is born with -- of life and
4 of liberty, and of the pursuit of happiness. I happen to
5 believe that man was created in the image of his Maker, and
6 as such he has a spark that we call the soul and the spirit.
7 And that no one has a right to either subdue that soul or that
8 spirit, or to control it without his consent.

9 In other words, I believe that the whole basis of
10 democracy is in a very real sense spiritual, and not political.

11 And I believe if that is the case, then, that social
12 justice takes on real meaning. Not just the meaning of prag-
13 matism, not just because maybe it is a little better because it
14 works out better. But because man is entitled to respect. Human
15 dignity does not come by the way people conduct themselves --
16 because sometimes they do not act very dignified. The whole
17 belief in human equality, or in equality and human dignity,
18 is predicated on a spiritual concept of man's relationship to
19 his Maker, man's relationship to nature, man's relationship to
20 his God. That is the whole fundamental bedrock basis of the
21 democratic system. And that is why when you work with people,

22 to help people help themselves, that every man shall have his
23 chance, that he will be able to make the most out of his life,
24 that you are doing what really you were born to do, and you are
25 doing the best thing that you could possibly do.

1 So you can see why everybody is concerned and interested
2 in the Peace Corps.

3 I think this is what our Peace Corps is doing.

4 I think it is the finest living expression of the
5 purpose and the meaning of America that has ever been put
6 to the field and put to the test. It really exemplifies the
7 qualities of first-class citizenship.

8 Now, I know there are many people that have other
9 explanations about what we ought to do and why we do things,
10 and why we do not. There are those that have Freudian
11 explanations and other kinds. I won't dispute those. I will
12 just let you have them. I have got my own.

13 I think the good news for America and the world -- and
14 by the way, this ought to make some news -- there is so little
15 good news recited any more. I want to hold up both arms and
16 say good news for America and for the world is that so many of
17 our young people feel compelled by some inner force to do this
18 right thing and to do it now.

19 I just left my home city yesterday. It is still in
20 mourning from the weekend of the Boston Red Sox. The score was two
21 to one by the way, when I came in. The St. Louis Cardinals
22 was leading two to one.

23 I was there this weekend, and I read some articles
24 on some of our young people that were anything but pleasing
25 to me -- I did not think it showed the best side of them. It

1 yet on that same Sunday, every fraternity of every college in the
2 Twin City area has gone out to do a civic project, either in a
3 community house, a settlement house, an old person's home or
4 a hospital. My own son was out all day long washing windows.
5 They were not getting paid for it. Everyone of them, once a
6 week, have a responsibility to help somebody else. This
7 came out of some discussions we had a year ago, when I
8 visited with some of our young fraternity boys. I said, "Listen,
9 you guys live pretty good. Do you ever find out how anybody
10 else lives? Why don't you just -- instead of just having
11 house parties, why don't you take this enthusiasm you have,
12 this energy, and take it on out and share it with people who
13 have all too little of the good life? Why don't you find the
14 sick, the old, the needy, the crippled -- why don't you get
15 to them, and offer some help? Why don't you find some students
16 that need some tutorial work, share your talents," and they are
17 doing it -- they are doing it. But nobody gives them a
18 pat on the back.

19 I don't suppose they maybe expect a pat on the back.
20 But I will tell you that most people enjoy one once in a while,
21 particularly if they have been getting a kick in certain parts
22 of the anatomy a long time.

23 So little emphasis on good news. What a good thing
24 it was for those hundreds of young men to do that. And how
25 unfortunate it is that people in that great area of over a million

1 people never even know that they were doing it.

2 The good news is the Peace Corps. I know that much
3 of it is known. But I know so much about what you do, and
4 how little of it is really known by the public. The lives
5 that you save, the people that you heal, the illiterate that
6 you have taught, the communities that you have helped develop.
7 What a wonderful picture this is, and the American people ought
8 to know this is what we are doing, because the American people
9 are becoming disillusioned, disappointed -- constantly reading
10 about what seems to be our failures, constantly hearing about
11 what seems to be our lack of moral quality.

12 Well, I have been around quite a little while. I had
13 some young fellow tell me not long ago I would not understand what
14 he was thinking about because I was too old. I said, "You are
15 wrong, buddy. I am not as old as you are. I have just been
16 around a little while longer." Age has nothing to do with
17 how old you are. As a professor I used to find 19-year old
18 students that should have been collecting social security and
19 medicare. Except that we did not include them under the program
20 at that time.

21 Well, there is a lot of good news.

22 One of the items of good news tis that right now
23 the Peace Corps is the largest single employer of new American
24 College graduates.

25 Now, that is great good news. And I think that news

1 ought to be spread around the world -- that the men and women
2 of our universities volunteer by the thousands to help some-
3 body else. They are not just self-indulgent people. I guess
4 you know better than I do that 20 to 25 per cent of the
5 graduating seniors in some of our colleges and universities
6 have applied for the Peace Corps. And some 40,000 young people
7 will apply this year alone. And they are not going to get
8 rich monetarily out of it. It is not going to be luxury
9 living. And for most of these young people it would be easy
10 just to say no, and there is a job awaiting them -- if you can
11 pass the qualifications of being a Peace Corps volunteer, you
12 can do all right any place else.

13 There could be assignments that are far more comfort-
14 able and far more profitable and secure. So when young people
15 turn right around and say yes, rather than no, saying, yes, we will
16 take up the challenge, that means something to me. It means
17 something to me as a citizen. And it means a lot to me as a Vice-
18 President. Because it says a great deal about America. And that
19 is the voice of America that I want the world to hear.

20 Now, the whole idea of the Peace Corps is something that
21 says yes. It is an affirmative proposition.

22 You know, I say I have a couple of speeches in mind.
23 I am giving you now part of the other one again.

24 I get accused around this city of being such an
25 optimist. I even read every now and then -- they sort of

1 all the time. That means you are not too bright, and really
2 haven't faced up to the realities. I thought I ought to let you
3 in on why I am. First of all the area of pessimism is so over-
4 populated, so overcrowded. There are just some people -- they
5 are never quite so happy as when they are unhappy. And really
6 they are never quite so satisfied as when they are miserable
7 And I looked over on the other side, and found that that whole
8 vast plateau of optimism was practically unoccupied. The
9 competition wasn't too much over there. I have spent my fair
10 share in the classroom, fair share of time, both as teacher
11 and student. And I never considered that being an intellectual
12 was being negative. Not at all. I heard somebody say not
13 long ago "President Johnson ought to have more intellectual s
14 around him." I said he has thirteen members of the Cabinet,
15 and eight of them are Ph. D.'s. How many more do you want him
16 to have? How about the rest of us folks that didn't make
17 Ph. D. -- aren't they entitled to some representation? There
18 is no shortage of intellectuals. But you are not an intellectual
19 just because you can stand around and look like you swallowed
20 a cucumber. You can be a positive intellectual. You can have
21 some faith in mankind. You can have some belief in the future.

22 And I am an optimist because I think I have got an
23 awful lot of evidence on my side.

24 I don't think that the United States is what it is
25 today because it had a lot of fools being its leaders, or because

1 American business was corrupt, or because American labor was
2 filled up with goons, or because the universities were filled
3 up with Communists. Now I think that basically we are what
4 we are because we have the willingness to experiment; when
5 something didn't work to cast it aside -- we have not had a
6 doctrinaire, dogmatic approach. We have had a great abiding
7 faith in our capacity to meet the problems before us, to
8 experiment, to try and try again, and above all to have tremendous
9 confidence in our capacity to do what we needed to do. And we
10 did not end up where we are in comparison to the rest of the
11 world by being a constant failure. The sum total of the United
12 States is not the aggregate total of failures.

13 I got that off my chest. I wasn't going to give
14 you that. I was going to save that for another time. But I
15 thought you ought to know what I think -- since I have got you
16 trapped.

17 But you in the Peace Corps know what that means. You
18 could immediately give up. When you see the unbelievable
19 problems that you are going to face. When a volunteer goes into
20 a faraway place, into a strange land, and sees the almost super-
21 human task that lies before him -- if that volunteer wasn't a
22 "yes" person, I mean if that volunteer wasn't one of affirmation,
23 of advocacy, of belief and faith, he would fold up and go home.

24 The whole idea of the Peace Corps is something that
25 says yes -- it is totally and naturally and wholeheartedly and

1 healthily an affirmation.

2 I have seen the work of the Peace Corps volunteers
3 in many many countries. Even on our recent trip over to the
4 American Bar Association in Honolulu, I was driving down the
5 road one night about eleven o'clock and somebody said, "Say,
6 there is a Peace Corps training camp here." I said, "Stop
7 the car." We got out and had a great time -- sort of a
8 roadside meeting. Almost felt like I was politicking for a
9 while there. Saw a crows, and just couldn't resist the temp-
10 tation to stop off and say a few words. It is marvellous
11 to sense the enthusiasm that is there.

12 I think I know, and I know that I have seen what the
13 Peace Corps has done for America in America. I was looking
14 over the speech that I delivered in the Senate when we presented
15 this bill, to authorize the Peace Corps. And I said the Peace
16 Corps will do more for America in America or as much for America
17 in America as it will do for others in other parts of the world.
18 And it has, as it brings out the best in our own young people --
19 it stands as a symbol and a reminder of -- to all Americans
20 of what we are and what America stands for. And it brings back
21 to this Nation a host of mature leadership.

22 For those reasons -- what it does for others and
23 what it does for us -- I am interested -- well, let me put it
24 this way. I am not interested in a small Peace Corps, nor is
25 President Johnson interested in a small Peace Corps. I want

1 to see the Peace Corps grow right up to the point where
2 further size could yield little more lasting value.

3 In other words, I do not want any ceilings. In
4 the space age we ought not to have any. We need launching
5 platforms, and the infinity of the universe. These ceiling
6 people are all the time stunting one's growth.

7 Every American who can meet Peace Corps standards
8 ought to have a chance. Every job that needs to be done
9 ought to receive the answer -- yes, we will try.

10 Now, I do not know how many that is going to be, or
11 how many jobs there are to undertake. But I know this --
12 dollar for dollar you get more rewards and returns out of the
13 investment in the Peace Corps than almost anything or anything
14 we are doing as a government and as a country.

15 I think our people want the largest, the strongest
16 outlet possible for the kind of personal commitment that the
17 Peace Corps represents. And I think that is particularly
18 true now in such a troubled world, where our objectives and
19 policies and motives are all too often so misunderstood,
20 even at home as well as abroad.

21 I do not think our people see it as a matter of
22 government policies -- the Peace Corps and its membership --
23 yes, even those who do not like all of those policies neverthe-
24 less can shoulder a burden, can test themselves, and can work
25 for a cause that they know is right.

1 No one is asked to take the blood oath to support
2 every plan in the Democratic Platform, or the Republican plat-
3 form -- I will even go that far -- for the Peace Corps.
4 Not on your life. You are asked to give service to the
5 objective of the Corps.

6 And I think there is another benefit which our country
7 is gaining from the Peace Corps, and we are only beginning to feel
8 it. I mentioned it a moment ago.

9 Volunteers returning from overseas are asking
10 hard, penetrating questions when they come back home. This
11 is both your greatest strength and may I say can cause you
12 some of the greatest difficult. Some people do not like
13 to have people ask questions, back home.

14 They have been polite guests overseas for two years.
15 At home, the Peace Corps volunteer returning does not hesitate
16 to speak out and to challenge old orthodoxies.

17 But I must say to those returnees, through this medium,
18 and through this means -- do not expect to put their loving
19 arms around you and say, "Now that you sacrificed for us for
20 two years, what can I offer you?" It will still be a scramble.
21 And you will have to prove yourself back home just exactly
22 as you proved yourself abroad. In fact, it may be a little
23 tougher back here.

24 These Peace Corps volunteers that return are inject-
25 ing imagination and new energy into public service. They are

1 becoming involved in some of our toughest, the most difficult
2 social problems -- trying to find modern solutions.

3 Fortunately, they are not afraid of the sleeves up,
4 roll-up the sleeves hard work. They are giving our country a
5 lift by their spirit and their determination, and they are
6 giving our country quite a bargain, too.

7 I think it would be enough to have a Peace Corps
8 which turns money back to the Federal Treasury. This year,
9 for example, -- you turned back \$5 million, Jack. My, we
10 should give you a sort of a citation. You deserve it for
11 more reasons than that.

12 It is no small feat that the annual costs per volunteer
13 have declined from about \$9,000 in 1963 to just under \$7,400
14 last year.

15 I do not think any other agency of government can make
16 that claim. It is amazing.

17 But every dollar that has been spent on the Peace
18 Corps in services overseas has been well spent. Not another cent
19 has been required for the new dividends that we are receiving
20 here at home.

21 This year, the number of returned volunteers will
22 surpass for the first time the number in active service. From
23 now on the Peace Corps back home is going to show us quite a
24 time.

25 But we are short of 171,000 teachers in this country

1 and that is a conservative figure. That is for today. And
2 by the way, just so you may think ahead -- we are going to have
3 another one hundred million people in the United States at a mini-
4 mum between now and the year 2,000, in the next 33 years. There
5 is a question of where they are going to live, how they are going
6 to live, who is going to be their teachers. Fifty per cent
7 of the population is under 25 now. Sixty per cent of the popu-
8 lation will be under 25 in the year 2,000.

9 So we are going to have a pretty big teaching problem,
10 a challenge.

11 Our social services organizations are having trouble
12 just coping with the old problems, finding new people -- so
13 might I add, are our two major political parties. And all levels
14 of government and business, social leaders, organizations,
15 labor, are looking for new talents.

16 America needs people with courage and idealism and
17 experience. No wonder the Philadelphia Board of Education
18 is seeking returned volunteers for its schools, and hiring
19 them by mail from overseas.

20 And I think I know why. Mr. Dilworth, of that
21 Board of Education, is a man of great vision.

22 No wonder cities hit by unrest this ummer are going
23 to the Peace Corps for more help.

24 New York City now has a full-time recruiter just to
25 hire volunteers for school systems, that is Peace Corps

1 volunteers, and other agencies of the government.

2 These young people are going to get into our
3 national bloodstream. And it is going to be better than any
4 Geritol that anybody ever took. It is the kind of social,
5 political Geritol that this Nation needs. Young men and women
6 who have learned something about the world in which they live,
7 and who have gone out to help that world out of conviction,
8 and who have come back, mature, ripened, improved in their
9 sensitivity and their judgment. In a very real sense, you
10 have had your internship on somebody else, and you have come
11 back fully graduated, experienced and developed, to your home
12 country.

13 As these young people get into our national blood-
14 stream, it will be the best infusion of talent, of spirit and
15 determination that we have had for many a generation.

16 For those of us who have been a part of the Peace
17 Corps, it will be our proudest hour, to see the idea of the Peace
18 Corps, which was our export, come back as our best import. To
19 see that which we practiced abroad, to come home and do more
20 for our own country than we were able to do for others, in other
21 parts of the world.

22 For the Peace Corps will blend again with the people
23 from whom it sprung -- or should I say from which it never quite
24 left -- and returned, imparting new vigor, new promise, and new
25 conviction for Americans that this Nation's "thing", or its

1 commitment was right in the first place, and that it is
2 still worth doing -- any time, anywhere.

3 I want my country, our country, to be known for its
4 teachers, for its doctors, for its social workers, for its
5 enterprisers, for its workers, and not just for its weapons
6 and its power and its wealth and its soldiers. I want the
7 history books that my grandchildren will read to say that in
8 this, the last third of the twentieth century, America was
9 dedicated, as it has been through its history, but re-dedicated
10 with renewed vigor to nation-building.

11 I want us to be the real peacemakers -- which
12 does not mean to be either pacific or cowardly. And they
13 surely are not the same, or to be so interpreted, but be the
14 kind of peacemaker that is active, a builder, a creator, one
15 that shares of his own talents and gifts with others, one that
16 shares of his own abundance with others. But above all, shares
17 himself.

18 I really believe that we can mark this out for our
19 time.

20 I am convinced that the next 33 years will offer us
21 greater opportunities than the past two hundred. I am convinced
22 with every fiber of my being. I believe that the greatness
23 the incredible discoveries of science and technology, coupled
24 with our sense of humanism, or should I say with a strong
25 infusion of the humanities, can really bring us along the

1 path of democracy -- far beyond where we are now.

2 I am not one that believes that our work is ever
3 done. No matter what we do, there will still be more to do.
4 No matter how many injustices we are able to correct, there
5 will still be some left for generations yet unborn. We have
6 not created the Utopia, nor shall we in our lifetime.

7 But I am convinced of one thing -- that you are
8 unworthy of existence unless you can really say to yourself,
9 if to no one else, that "I have added something to the well-
10 being of somebody else besides myself."

11 I think every generation, and indeed every human
12 being has a sacred obligation, not only to conserve his
13 heritage, and his inheritance, but rather to wisely invest it,
14 to prudently use it, and to add on to it so that he can pass
15 it along, richer and better and stronger and clearer, to some-
16 one else.

17 I am one of those that believes that America still is
18 essentially a moral and ethical Nation in the highest meaning
19 of those terms, that it is a peace-loving Nation, that it is
20 a nation-building Nation, that it is a Nation of compassion, and
21 thereby reveals its strength. That it is a Nation of charity
22 and thereby reveals its highest purpose. And I commend the Peace
23 Corps, and all of its volunteers, for setting a fine example of
24 these highest aspirations of the American people.

25 Don't let yourself down. Don't become cynical. Be

1 positive in your attitude, and have a wide, abiding faith
2 that what you are doing is the right thing to do. And do
3 it with all the zest and vitality that you have.

4 Remember this -- that anybody can do what ought to
5 be done, and most anybody can do what people say you can do.
6 The difference between a great people and an ordinary people
7 is the willingness and the capacity to do the impossible.
8 Some people say it is impossible in our time to lift the level
9 of existence on this globe. There are the professionals who
10 tell us that the race between population and resources
11 makes it impossible. There are some people that say it is
12 impossible to envisage the day that we can have universal
13 disarmament and general peace. There are those that say
14 that it is impossible for a world to have law and order, and
15 international law that is inforceable and workable.

16 I say that it is not impossible. The fact that
17 some people say it is should be a challenge to us to make it
18 come true -- because the story of the United States of America,
19 as one Nation, and there are others that can surely be included
20 -- but the story of this Nation is that what some people said
21 could not be done was done -- the opening of the West, the
22 creation of a representative government, the extension of
23 universal suffrage, and a host of other things. The impossible
24 became our hallmark, became the characteristics of our national
25 character. And I want to make sure that we do not let down those

1 who have walked before us, but rather that we reach out to
2 a higher ground, and even to greater purposes.

3 Thank you very much. (Applause)

4 MR. ASHABRANNER: Mr. Vice-President, I want to
5 thank you for all of us for a glorious affirmation, re-
6 affirmation of the Peace Corps. We will take your words and
7 share them with our volunteers overseas, and they will become
8 a part of our history and our folk-lore for a long time to come.

9 Good friends all, I want to thank you, each one,
10 for being here today to share with my family and with me what
11 for us of course is a very happy occasion.

12 I will make a speech almost any time, but not today.

13 I just want to say that I, of course, will never
14 be able to say that I did not know what kind of job I was
15 letting myself in for. The four regional directors have
16 given me a very good orientation, and the number one man has
17 himself, and I hope that I will be able to slip into the work
18 with a minimum breaking-in period.

19 I think that I have seen and done almost everything
20 in the Peace Corps. And yet I know that there is one thing
21 that I have not done, and I have it very much in mind. I have
22 not told my wife, Martha, about this yet. But some day, when
23 we have made A.B. generalists out of these two red-heads,
24 and remembering that my illustrious predecessor was able to
25 talk his mother and father into becoming Peace Corps volunteers

1 -- I brought my mother today, and began working on that. But
2 when this is done, and when we have paid off the mortgage
3 on the homestead, I really hope that my wife and I might be
4 Peace Corps volunteers some place -- if we can make it through
5 selection, and training -- because having worked with hundreds
6 of volunteers in Nigeria and India, and having seen many more
7 in other places, I know that being a Peace Corps volunteer can
8 be the best job in the Peace Corps, and one of the best jobs that
9 any American can have at any time. I know that we are putting
10 the very finest that America has today into the Peace Corps
11 overseas. And I would like to be a part of that.

12 So I look forward to a long stay with the Peace
13 Corps, though it may have a lengthy break at some point. And I
14 would like to leave one final thought for those of us who work
15 on the Peace Corps staff -- and this is mainly a Peace Corps
16 staff audience today -- that our big job is to continue to
17 see, continue to make absolutely certain, that being a Peace
18 Corps volunteer remains the very best job that the Peace Corps
19 has to offer, and that America has to offer.

20 Mr. Vice-President, I would like to thank you
21 personally for coming today to swear me in, and to speak to
22 the Peace Corps. This is an extremely great honor.

23 (Applause.)
24
25



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