

PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONFERENCE, 1968
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 24, 1968

I would now like to turn to a second item on our agenda.

Next Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday on January 29, 30, and 31, I will convene the Youth Opportunity Conference, 1968. In my capacity as Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, I will meet with the mayors of the 50 largest cities, or their representatives, as well as the special Youth Coordinators who will be supervising each city's summer programs.

Experience during the past several years has highlighted the need for early and careful planning. Summer programs must complement the year-round efforts and they must be focused particularly on young people. The Youth Opportunity Conference is designed to achieve this early planning and coordination.

You have been given background material outlining in some detail the purposes of the Conference and the activities that will take place during the three days.

Let me, however, stress two points:

1) We will be presenting "nuts and bolts" information on developing youth opportunity programs focused particularly on disadvantaged youth.

2) We will be working to mobilize a TOTAL community effort in behalf of youth opportunity programs during the coming summer. In past years -- we have only scratched the surface in developing the private and voluntary support which is potentially available.

For example, ^{our} summer jobs campaign will be an integral part of the newly expanded manpower program and the National Alliance of Businessmen announced yesterday by President Johnson. Let me quote from his manpower message: 'The Alliance will also have another vital mission: to find productive jobs for the 200 thousand needy youth this summer -- an experience that will lead them back to school in the fall, or onto other forms of education training or permanent employment.

"The Alliance will work closely in this venture with the Vice President. As Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, he will soon meet with the Alliance and with the Mayors of our 50 largest cities to advance this pressing work."

The chairman of the National Alliance of Businessmen, Mr. Henry Ford II, as well as a number of the National Executive Committee will be with us Monday afternoon to emphasize the crucial importance of finding jobs for the 200 thousand disadvantaged young people in our major urban areas.

There will, I suppose, be those who will say that our major concern in making these plans, in mobilizing the public and private resources of America, is the prevention of further civil disorder in our major cities.

These people are dead wrong.

Of course every responsible American is determined to maintain law and order. Every responsible American knows of tragedy and heartbreak caused by the personal injuries, the loss of life, the destruction of homes and business which have occurred.

And every responsible American is willing to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent a repetition of these tragic events.

But let the record be absolutely clear on this point: we talk of youth opportunity and we plan to expand our summer programs of jobs, education, recreation, arts and culture not to stop riots but to help people.

We expect the Youth Opportunity Conference to be a lively and free-swinging affair. We will be exchanging information and views with the 50 Youth Coordinators, Federal officials, representatives from American business

and labor, and voluntary and private groups concerned with these problems.

We know that despite our considerable progress last year, we nevertheless fell short in the conception and execution of some of the programs.

The principle aim of the Youth Opportunity Conference will be to take steps now so that these mistakes will not be repeated this summer.

All sessions of the Conference will be open to the press and we welcome your attendance. Further inquiries should be directed to the Press Officer of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity, Neal Gregory, who is with us this afternoon.

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