

Remarks by

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY

Adjutants General Association of the National Guard

Washington, D.C. - January 26, 1968

When I served in the United States Senate, I was one of those that staunchly supported this great organization. I think the National Guard is as vital to the defense and the security of the United States as any combination of our military forces, for it represents the people in defense of their country. I think it is important to every community, to every young man, to every village, every town, every city. The American people must be brought to understand the importance of their own national security and their self defense, and I don't know a better way to do it than to have a citizen's Guard, so to speak -- a citizen's Army and a citizen's military force represented here in the different branches of our armed services in the National Guard.

So I come to you not as a new friend but an old friend and not as one to say kind words to you in the hopes that you'll be helpful to us in many endeavors but rather to pay my respects and to thank you for the tremendous service that the National Guard has given to this Nation since the beginning of this Republic.

The great English philosopher and political economist, John Stuart Mill, once said: "Let a person have nothing to do for his country, and he will have no love for it." And how true that is. Or you can put it another way: Let a man have something to do for his country, let him participate in it, and he will love it.

We find this to be true throughout the world. When people engage in self-help, when they do it themselves, when they are involved, they defend it, they protect it. If it's done for them by somebody else, there is less desire or apparently less motivation to defend it, to love it and to protect it.

So I hope that the Guard will always receive the enthusiastic, determined support from the Congress and from the people. As one of the officers of our Government, I am mindful of the contributions that you make every day in domestic security and our national security, and I am mindful also of another thing that you do, promoting good citizenship. And believe me, we need it. We need more and more of our young

people above all to understand that with every right comes a duty, with every freedom comes a responsibility, with every liberty comes a burden. And if we don't understand that, then the cause of democracy and the cause of freedom as we know it is a lost cause. But I think it's not a lost cause and I think it's a winning one, and I guess I'm one of the few optimists in Washington. The City is known for the unusual breed of perennial pessimists that it can produce. But I came from South Dakota where you had to be optimistic. And I am now in Washington where it is necessary to be optimistic. I think the history of this country demonstrates beyond the shadow of a doubt that we have the right -- every right -- to be optimistic about our future, because we have survived every trial and tribulation that a people could ever be confronted with, including civil war. And we've come out, not for the worse, but the better. And we're going through a very difficult period now, an exceedingly difficult period of time, a period of time in which there are many social tensions that are aggravated at home by the tensions abroad. This is a world that's in turbulence, in which there has been drastic change, change at home and change abroad, a world in which colonization or the imperial domain -- the colonies -- is no longer. The age of colonies is over, and the age of separate citizenship -- of segregated citizenship -- is over. Now it takes time to make these adjustments and during that period of time there is always anxiety and trouble. People do not give up prejudices without a fight. It's even difficult to get young people to give up prejudices that have only been recently acquired. And for those of us that are older, it's much more difficult. I've used the example many times of my experience as a public servant in flying across this country and across the oceans, and you know every one of us used to inquire about the weather. And frequently the weather man would say, you're going to be passing through a front and when you do that you may have a little turbulence.

Well, Gentlemen, we're passing through a front. We're coming from one age -- one period of our national life in which certain social and economic patterns were the established norm -- and we're moving into another pattern of national life in which the old pattern is being shattered and the new pattern is being designed. When you go through that, where those two fronts meet, you have social turbulence.

It's always been thus. It was such when we went from the mercantile age into the age of industrial revolution. It was thus when we

came from the medieval period to the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Incredible upheavals throughout the world. You know, a knowledge of history gives you a sense of value and perspective, also a sense of confidence. When a friend was complaining the other day about the tremendous social and international tensions that we have, I said, "My dear friend, it isn't any different than it has been. Are you unfamiliar with the Thirty Years War, with the Hundred Years War? It's happened before."

When social systems, political systems, were in a change, when power relationships were changed. The main ability and capacity one needs to have is to maintain the strength and the viability and the flexibility but not to be like jello. To have a sufficient degree of resilience, like you see sometimes on the great B-52 when those wings go up and down. If they were stationary they'd be crisp and break, but they have that flexibility and resilience that permits them to take off and to glide and the power and the strength that is needed for that journey.

Now we're going through a period like this right now, in which we need both a sense of direction, a degree of adjustability, flexibility, and a sense of purpose. And we've got to hope and pray that this ship of state that we've created has the fiber and has the material and has the substance to take these storms, this turbulence. And we have to hope that we've produced the crews that may be necessary for this long voyage, the leaders that can guide us to our destination. That's what it's all about.

In the meantime, you and I know that we can't get to our destination of a society of equal opportunity, of a higher standard of living, of a greater regard of our fellow human beings, that great noble goal of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We can't get there if the whole social structure is to be torn and rent by violence, by riot, by disrespect of law and by utter disregard for other peoples' rights, any more than you can expect to bring a great commercial airliner through a storm -- by having every other member of the crew in a pitched battle in the cockpit.

So our task is one of self-discipline, one of strength without being oppressive; self-discipline, without being arrogant and authoritarian.

And it's one of teaching respect for law and order and setting the example. And when the few engage in criminal acts, end them quickly, promptly. At the same time it is difficult not to blame an entire group -- or community -- for the acts of a few. But we are supposed to be able to do difficult things.

The great story of America is its capacity to do the impossible. Anybody can do what's possible, you can just be anybody. The story of this Nation is doing the impossible. The impossibility of government by the consensus of the governed was considered impossible until we tried it. It was impossible to open a whole continent in less than a half a century. It was impossible, but we did it. It was impossible to span this continent with strips of steel in less than a quarter of a century, yet we did it. Holding this union together -- it was almost impossible -- but we accomplished it. And the impossibility of converting what was a rural economy -- an agrarian economy -- into the most sophisticated, urbanite, industrialized economy that the world has ever known. We did it. The impossibility of incorporating into our midst the life-line to the ethnic groups, the cultures, the religions of the entire world, bringing with them prejudices and patterns of diversity and disagreement from the old nations and coming into a new nation and having people live together, with a reasonable degree of peace and tranquility and self-respect, and respect for the other fellow. In other words, creating a society of brotherhood. They said it was impossible, but we've come mighty close to doing it and we're well on the way to getting it done.

You have to have a lot of faith to believe these things. But the reason I said what I just did is because the record of our capacity to do the impossible is pretty good. Therefore, I predicate my prophecy on the fulfillment of other prophecies. It seemed like our prophets of yesterday were pretty good, and I don't think this Nation is any less competent and able now than it was a decade ago or a generation or a century ago. I think it's every bit as good and better.

Now I've come to a matter of concern for all of us. I'm not here to give you any instructions as to how you operate the National Guard, what you do in terms of domestic security, what you do in terms of your military responsibilities or international security and our national

security -- you have commanding officers who know how to do this. The Chief of Staff of the United States Army has been here. I'm sure that you've heard from others and I know that you've heard from General Wilson, and you're hearing from you top people on your responsibilities as military officers.

I want to talk to you now as fellow citizens, and yet I talk to you as fellow citizens who have a unique opportunity and a very unique responsibility.

The National Guard has about 2,500 or 2,600 armories scattered throughout the United States, and you have camps with a total capacity of over 80,000. You have equipment, you have trained manpower, and what is more, you have the respect of the community. I was very fortunate in receiving from the Adjutants General Association and from the National Guard Association the report of the Guard's service to the community, and particularly its service to the underprivileged and youth. I hope this report finds its way into public print. I know there have been criticisms of the National Guard. I hope that those who have taken the time to write the stories of criticism will take the time to write the stories of your achievements and of your great service. I have in my hands a report that's four pages long of the very fine service the National Guard throughout the 50 States and the District of Columbia has made to the underprivileged, needy and sick, to the disadvantaged, and particularly to our young. I don't think the public knows of this. Of course, they know it in one little town or one State, but the great story of the service of the National Guard to the common good has not been known, unless you get mobilized and you're called out on riot duty and generally what you hear -- what is heard about you -- is the mistakes that you make. I know a little bit about that too, I'm in some type of work like this. So you know a great deal more about my mistakes, than you do about anything that I might have done right. The only one who knows about the other is my mother. And by the way, I think she's more honest than the reports.

Anyway, I wanted to compliment the National Guard for its work in several States. I know what you've done, and I know that last year you helped us with 70,000 youngsters -- young people -- who received support from the National Guard. In June of last year I met with General Wilson and we talked about what you could do for the Youth Opportunity Program, and that's why I'm here.

I'm Chairman of the President's Youth Opportunity Council. We've been at work for three years -- first on an ad hoc basis -- but last year the President put it together on the basis of an Executive Order. Now that Council consists of the top officials of this government that have any programs at all that relate to young people. And we are mounting this year the greatest program we've ever had for Summer programs for young people.

Schools let out in late May or early June, I don't know why it is that we look upon a school plant as a nine-month operation -- I guess it must be because that's the cycle for birth -- but schools have no reason not to be open twelve months a year. Every playground, every gymnasium, every swimming pool ought to be available to the youngsters of America year-round. These schools do not belong to the superintendents, and they do not belong to the School Board, they belong to the people. Now we ought to find that what we really need is just enough administrative funds to properly staff some of those facilities.

Today is a different day than when I was a boy. When I was a boy I didn't have to worry much about what I was going to do in the Summer; my father had me at work. But there aren't many corner drug stores left.

Most of us grew up at a time when your father, or your grandfather, or your uncle could include you somewhere on the farm or in the local business alongside of him and there was work to do. Now what would you think if I bring my boys down here to work alongside me? There'd be an article in the paper calling it nepotism. Just image what it is to try to pick a job for a young kid this time of year. You can't take your son along to the General Motors assembly plant, they just won't make it possible. They've got to have a fellow there turning on bolt 40-B and slapping on the fender. There's no place for little Johnny.

And most of us today -- most of the adults today -- work for large companies or work in government where our children cannot be with us. Therefore, we need activities for young people. Because if you think atom power is powerful just take a good look at youth power. There's more concentrated energy in a 1,000 youngsters than there are in all the atom bombs put together. And what they need is

direction; they need to be wanted. They need to have something they know is important to do. They need to have activity, to utilize that energy, to have during that period of time when they're not in school some proper utilization of those tremendous resources of energy and talent that is there. Otherwise, it goes bad -- something that's not good, to something that's bad. This is what we mean by the explosive power of idle youth on the street corner. And it'll happen to white or black. All the delinquency is not amongst the poor, I can tell you that.

So we're trying to find a way and a means across this country -- not by the Federal government doing it -- but by the Federal government encouraging local people, local private groups, local government to get young people active, and to harness that energy for wholesome purposes in the training of physical fitness, the improvement of the mind, the development of skills, and gainful employment. And it's a tremendous undertaking, but I can tell you that there is no hope for America until we find a way to put to work -- and to constructive use -- the tremendous energy of young people. And the greatest area of unemployment in this country is not amongst adults -- the area of unemployment that concerns America today is between the ages of 16 and 21. That's where the unemployment is. That's where the idleness is, and that's where the mischief can become destructive.

Isn't it interesting that a society that produces 800 billion dollars of goods and services can't produce jobs for a 17 year old boy, enough jobs and enough constructive work to absorb his potential and to absorb his energy. Now if he doesn't have a job, he has to have something else. He needs to be busy, in some kind of community work, or volunteer work, or athletics, or recreation, or what we call the cultural enrichment programs, or remedial reading -- keeping somehow occupied on something he knows is worthwhile for him. He needs somebody who cares, the personal touch.

One of the reasons that government programs sometimes are not successful is that they lack the personal touch. I've been a Scoutmaster, and I know about what I speak. I've worked with youth all my life. They'll respond like a seed responds to fertile soil; they'll just blossom, if given the chance. And the ones that look like they'd be last to blossom are the first. The kid that is sometimes the most depressed -- the one that seems to be the farthest out -- if he just gets a little

attention and a little correction and a little firm manly guidance. He'll come to and he'll shape up, as we say.

And they want to. Believe me, if there's one thing about this generation that I've learned, it's they want to be needed. They want somebody to talk to them. They want somebody not only to talk to them, but even at times to be firm with them. They actually resent the permissiveness of the time, when you get right down to it.

So I come to you, as officers, to help us. I ask you to open up these National Guard armories. Now you've got regulations that say you can, but here's what the problem is. You talk about red tape, we know a lot about it down here, we create it. Red tape. Now if you have to go off to the Governor and to the State Adjutant General every time that you're going to use the men's room in the local armory, well, you're going to have a lot of trouble. I can be more explicit. The fact of the matter is, you have to give authority to your local National Guard commanding officer for that local Guard commanding officer to be able to turn over the facilities under proper arrangements with the local authorities that are engaged in the Youth Opportunity Program.

Let the Guard become a part of the youth movement of America -- that's where you get your volunteers. I might even be so blunt as to say these are your customers. The National Guard belongs to the people. You have a responsibility for the facilities, for the training of the men. But that responsibility also goes down to the potentials, for many of these young boys that we're talking about right now are one day going to be in our National Guard. What a wonderful thing it would be if they knew that the National Guard armory was also their gymnasium. That at least once a week -- or twice a week -- the facilities were open. You've got showers, you've got the toilets, you've got ventilation, you have the gymnasium facilities, and we need it desperately. Instead of having people pass new bond issues to build new playgrounds, you have to learn how to make do.

The average public school in America, for example, is used six hours a day. Well, if General Motors only used its plant six hours a day it'd be the biggest welfare client in the United States. But, we've simply got to use these facilities too. I ask you to help us.

There are 2,500 armories and if we can get those facilities open -- I don't mean just reluctantly, I mean wholeheartedly -- we're going to help some young people stay out of trouble this Summer. I want the National Guard not only to be required to help in riot control, but I want you to be required to help in youth opportunity. That's the other side of the coin. And believe me it won't hurt those facilities at all. Those old armories are built to take any kind of use.

We were up at New Brunswick, New Jersey, last Fall and the National Guard turned over one of the armories to the city for use as a youth center. It was an old armory, and some of them are pretty old, as you know. But at least you can, during those Summer months, make any of them a temporary youth center without interrupting your training. And I know that's your first obligation. The National Guard helped in the Chicago area to get the trucks, and buses to transport kids out of the inner city down to Lake Michigan, down to the parks, down to the swimming pools, down to the lake front. Others can do this, too.

One of the real problems in this country is that we have people living off one place and we have the living facilities and the working facilities some place else. The greatest problem we have in the so-called ghettos today is that even if we try to get a hard-core unemployed man a job there isn't any place for him to work near his neighborhood, because there isn't any business there. We've got an urban society in which the jobs are 40 miles away from the bedroom, or 40 miles away from the kitchen and the parlor, and the poor, and the hard-core unemployed, and the needy, and the kids of that family just don't have the facilities and some times the vocation, and frequently it's the motivation, the get up and go.

So we've got to have facilities. Now there are times, for example, that we may want to build a new baseball diamond. You've got some earth moving equipment -- I've seen a little of it around, you know. And, you ought to try it out occasionally, to see if it still operate. Some of you have heavy equipment; some of you don't. But if there's a need for a new park, a new playground and a new baseball diamond that needs to be put up quickly for kids and you have the equipment, volunteer. That's the way you ask folks to come to the National Guard, to volunteer.

Go to your Mayor when you come back from this meeting and say, "Listen, I just talked to the Vice President and he wants the National Guard to volunteer in the Youth Opportunity Program. Mayor, I'm here, I salute, I volunteer." What I want you to do is not to be just waiting for somebody, I want you to take the lead as they used to say, take the bull by the horns, go to it, because I predict something for you. You're going to catch a lot of complaints and stuff, most likely.

I want you to be able to say, "Listen we're not only Guardsmen, but we're also citizens deeply interested not only in law and order, but interested in promoting the conditions of a society that is conducive to law and order." Because the pressing dangers, gentlemen, are not enough alone. Even though we know we cannot condone violence, we cannot possibly have our cities torn apart. There is a way and a means in this country for a redress of aggrievances through normal peaceful processes, and it ought to be manifested clear that we intend to have observance of law in this Nation.

But we also have to make it equally clear that the prime purpose of our society is to develop the conditions that make it possible for everybody to have his chance, for everyone to share in equal opportunity, every man his right to work, to live, and to be himself, and to be, as Thomas Wolfe wrote, "To every man his chance, to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden, opportunity. To every man the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever things his manhood and his vision can combine to make him. This . . . is the promise of America." That's what this country's all about.

Whatever you can do to engage young people in the jobs, some of you work with great industries, help us -- help them.

Remember, a better America is not entirely what happens in Washington. A better America is what happens where you live. America is the sum-total of every township, precinct, town, village, city, hamlet, county and State all added up. And if there's going to be a more peaceful and happier America it's going to be because you made a little contribution to it where you live. If there's going to be more jobs in America for the people who need work it's going to be because where you live somebody did something about it. If there's going to be a more just and a more humane America, it's going to be because you did something about it where you live.

There's so many people who look to Washington to do everything. I think this is one of the real tragedies of our time. I'm one of those who believes that even if the Federal government could do it all, it shouldn't; because that's a sure way to destroy self-reliance, and self-respect. This great America of ours must have leadership at every level of human activity. We cannot look just to the President and the Congress and Washington for leadership and for guidance, for resources and for programs. As a matter of fact, Washington ought to be looking out to the country for leadership, guidance and programs. That's where it ought to start. That's my philosophy and I think it's right.

One final word -- in helping with the youth program, let's not worry about those fees for these facilities. I know they're going to cost you something. That's your contribution. Just don't keep too many lawyers around now on this deal; just make an understanding. If we spend too much time with the fine print, filling out four copies and all the rest, the next thing you know, there'll never be a kid who will ever get inside. Someone will still be arguing about the third paragraph under Article III. Charge your Mayor's Council minimal fees if you have to have a fee to keep it legal. Make it a couple of dollars.

It's up to you, the State Adjutants General. You put the orders out to your local commanders, your local officers, and say: "Don't bother me now about whether or not little Johnny can go to the toilet in that armory, and don't bother me about whether or not they can play basketball on Tuesday night, and don't bother me as to whether or not you can have a youth program in there on Thursday afternoon. You know the nights and the days we have to have the armory for training. On those days nobody's to bother us. On the other days, you get with the Mayor and the local community leaders and have a youth program." You do it the way you figure it out, save a lot of paper work, and you'll have a great report. And then when the boys start criticizing you for doing your duty, you just bring out a 40 page report next year. And I'll get up and read it for all the critics.

Thank you very much.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY'S PRESENTATION

At The ADJUTANTS GENERAL MEETING

January 26, 1968

General Lloyd and General Watts, my good friend from Minnesota, General Moeglein, and of course General Wilson, who has been so cooperative to us and with us in all the endeavors that we've undertaken in past years with our youth program. Let me first of all say a word to the commanding officers of our National Guard.

When I served in the United States Senate, I was one of those that staunchly supported this great organization. I think the National Guard is as vital to the defense and the security of the United States as any combination of our military forces. I think it represents the people in defense of their country. I think it is important to every community, to every young man, to every village, every town, ever city. The American people must be brought to understand the importance of their own national security and their self defense, and I don't know a better way to do it than to have a citizen's Guard, so to speak, a citizen's Army and a citizen's military force represented here in the different branches of our armed services in the National Guard.

So I come to you not as a new friend but an old friend and not as one to say kind words to you in the hopes that you'll be helpful to us in many endeavors but rather to pay my respects and to thank you for the tremendous service that the National Guard has given to this Nation since the beginning of this republic.

In our apartment there where Mrs. Humphrey and I live, I'm privileged to have some prints that were given to me by the National Guard Association, showing the National Guard in action in defense of our country throughout the years of its history, and I treasure them very, very much because they remind me of the importance of citizen participation in all aspects of our national endeavor.

The great English philosopher and political economist, John Stuart Mill once said that let a man have nothing to do for his country and he will have no love for it. And how true that is. Or you can put it another way, let a man have something to do for his country, let him participate in it and he will love it.

We find this to be true throughout the world. When people engage in self-help, when they do it themselves, when they are involved, they defend it, they protect it. If it's done for them by somebody else, there is less desire or apparently less motivation to defend it, to love it and to protect it.

So I hope that the Guard will always receive the support and the enthusiastic determined support from the Congress and from the people that preserve us. And, if I ever have anything to do about it as I now have, as at least one of the officers of our government, you can rest assured that I'll be mindful of the contributions that have been made by the Guard and that I am mindful of the contributions that you make every day in domestic security and our national security and I am mindful also of the other thing that you do, promoting good citizenship. And believe me, we need it. We need more and more of our young people above all to understand that with every right comes a duty, with every freedom comes^a responsibility, with every liberty comes a burden, and if we don't understand that then the cause of democracy

and the cause of freedom as we know it is a lost cause. But I think it's not a lost cause and I think it's a winning one, and I guess I'm one of the few optimists in Washington. The City is known for the unusual breed of perennial pessimists that it can produce. But I came from South Dakota where you had to be optimistic. I meant from Minnesota where it's good to be optimistic. And I come to Washington where it is necessary to be optimistic. I think the history of this country demonstrates beyond a doubt -- beyond the shadow of a doubt -- that we have the right -- every right -- to be optimistic about our future, because we have survived every trial and tribulation that a people could ever be confronted with, including civil war. And we've come out not for worst but the better. And we're going through a very difficult period now, an exceedingly difficult period of time, a period of time in which there are many social tensions that are aggravated at home by the tensions abroad. This is a world that's in turbulence, in which there has been drastic change, change at home and change abroad, a world in which colonization or the imperial domain -- the colonies -- is no longer. The age of colonies is over and the age of separate citizenship -- of segregated citizenship -- is over. Now it takes time to make these adjustments and during that period of time there is always anxiety, trouble, people do not give up prejudices without a fight, it's even difficult to get young people to give up prejudices that have only been recently acquired and those of us that are older it's much more difficult. But it happens, it does come. I've used the example many times of my experience as a public servant in flying across this country and across the oceans, and you know every one of us -- at least in the early days before the jet -- before we could get at such high altitudes -- we always used to inquire -- at least most of us did -- that what will the weather be like. Now that's another way of saying that well I'm not quite

accustomed to flying yet and I'm a little frightened and I hope it's going to be a safe trip. And you call up the weather man, particularly if there's any -- out in our part of the country -- any sleet or snow, in other parts of the country if there's any high winds or storms, you call up the weather man and find out what the weather will be like. And frequently the weather man would tell you well you're going to be passing through a front and when you do that you may have a little turbulence or there may be high turbulence or it may be just milder turbulence.

Well, Gentlemen, we're passing through a front. We're coming from one age -- one period of our national life in which certain social and economic patterns were the established norm -- and we're moving into another pattern of national life in which the old pattern is being shattered and the new pattern is being designed and when you go through that, where those two fronts meet, you have social turbulence.

It's always been thus. It was such when we went from the age of the mercantile age into the age of industrial revolution, from about two, three, or four centuries. Terrible struggles. It was thus when we came from the period of medieval -- the medieval period -- to the period of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Incredible upheavals throughout the world. You know, a knowledge of history gives you a sense of value and perspective, also a sense of confidence. I told a friend of mine the other day, I said -- when he was complaining about the tremendous social and international tensions that we have -- I said, my dear friend, it isn't any different than it has been. Are you unfamiliar with the Thirty Years War, with the Hundred Years War? It's happened before. When social systems, political systems, were in a change, when power relationships were changing. The main ability and capacity one

needs to have is to maintain the strength and the viability and the flexibility but not to be like jello. To have a sufficient degree of resilience, like you see sometimes on the great B52 when those wings going up and down. If they were stationary they'd be crisp and break, but they have that flexibility and resilience that permits them to take off and to glide and the power -- and the strength -- that is needed for that journey and that tremendous power.

Now we're going through a period like this right now, in which we need both a sense of direction, a degree of adjustability, flexibility, and a sense of purpose. And we've got to hope and pray that this ship of state that we've created is, has the fiber and^{has}/the material and has the substance to take these storms, this turbulence, and we have to hope that we've produced the crew, or the crews, that may be necessary for this long voyage, the leaders that can guide us to our destination. That's what it's all about.

Now, in the meantime, you and I know that we can't get to our destination of a society of equal opportunity, of a higher standard of living, of a greater regard of our fellow humanbeings, that great noble goal of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ life, the pursuit of liberty and/happiness -- we can't get there if the whole social structure is to be torn and rent by violence, by riot, by disrespect of law and by utter disregard/^{for}~~of~~ other peoples' rights, any more than you can expect to bring a great commercial airliner through a storm ~~like~~ by having every other member of the crew in the pitch battle in the cockpit, and having the passengers intact, you don't get to a save landing that way.

So our task is one of self-discipline, one of strength without being oppressive, is one of self-discipline without being arrogant and authoritarian and it's one of teaching respect for law and order and setting the example. And when the few engage in criminal acts that happen end them quickly, promptly

and at the same time not to blame an entire group -- or community -- for the acts of a few is a very difficult thing. But we are supposed to be able to do difficult things. The great story of America is its capacity to do the impossible, anybody can do what's possible you don't have to be an American to do what's possible, you can just be anybody. The story of this Nation is doing the impossible, the impossibility of government by the consensus of the governed was considered impossible until we tried it. The impossibility of opening a whole continent in less than a half a century. It was impossible but we did it. The impossibility of spanning this continent with strips of steel, known as railroads, in less than a quarter of a century, it was impossible and we did it. The impossibility of holding this union together -- it was almost impossible -- but we accomplished it. And the impossibility of converting what was a rural economy -- an agrarian economy -- into the most sophisticated, urbanite, industrialized economy that the world's ever known. We did it. The impossibility of incorporating into our midst the life-line to the ethnic groups, the culture^s, the religions of the entire world, bringing with them prejudices and patterns of diversity and disagreement from the old nations and coming to a new nation and having people live together, with a reasonable degree of peace and tranquility and self-respect, and respect for the other fellow. In other words, creating a society of brotherhood. They said it was impossible, ~~but~~ we've come mighty close to doing it and we're well on the way to getting it done.

And, of course, there have been all kinds of other impossibilities. I remember, as a little boy, they said it was impossible -- and Kaiser Wilhelm thought so -- for the United States to be able to get to Europe in time to change the tide of battle, but he was wrong. And I can remember Franklin

Roosevelt when he said we must have waves of planes -- 50,000 he said -- and some of his critics said the man's a madman, it's impossible. Well, there were 90,000 or more, it wasn't impossible at all. And then there have been those who said to split the atom was impossible but we found ^{that that} ~~it~~ wasn't either. impossible/~~afterwards~~ Now the question is, is it possible to be able to control this power so that it doesn't destroy us. Some people say that's impossible. I think not, I think it's very possible that we'll be able to create a system of law and order, of respect for strength -- a balance of power if you wish to call it that -- that will ultimately preserve the world peace.

You have to have a lot of faith to believe these things, but the reason I said what I just did is because the record of our capacity to do the impossible is pretty good. And therefore, I predicate my prophecy on the fulfillment of other prophecies. It seemed like our prophets of yesterday were pretty good and I don't think this Nation is any less competent ~~than~~ ^{or} and able now than it was a decade ago, /a generation, or a century ago, I think it's every bit as good and better.

Now I've come to a matter of concern for all of us. I'm not here to give you any instructions as to how you operate the National Guard, what you do in terms of domestic security, what you do in terms of your military responsibilities or international security and our national security -- you have commanding officers who know how to do this. I gather that the Chief of Staff of the United States Army has been here, at least I understood he was coming -- General Johnson -- I'm sure that you've heard from others and I know that you've heard from General Wilson, and you're hearing from your top people on your responsibilities as military officers.

I want to talk to you now as fellow citizens, and yet I talk to you as fellow citizens, you who have a unique opportunity and a very unique responsibility.

The National Guard has about 2,500 or 2,600 National Guard armories scattered throughout the United States and you have camps with a total capacity of over 80,000, you have equipment, you have trained manpower, what is more you have respect of the community. Now I was very fortunate in receiving from the Adjutants General Association and from the National Guard Association the report of the National Guard of its service to the community and particularly its service to the underprivileged and youth. I hope this report finds its way into public print. I know there have been many ^{made} criticisms/of the National Guard, now I hope that those who have taken the time to write the ~~story~~ stories of criticism will take the time to write the ~~story~~ stories of your achievements and of your great service. And of course I have in my hands a report that's four pages long, and single spaced, of the very fine service the National Guard throughout the 50 States and the District of Columbia have made to the underprivileged, needy and sick, to the disadvantaged and particularly to our young. I don't think the public knows ^{or} this, of course they know it in one little town,/one State, at the time, but the great story of the service of the National Guard to the common good has ^{and you're} not been known, unless you get mobilized/~~called~~ called out on riot duty and ^d ~~then they let you hear~~ generally what you hear -- what is hear/about you -- ^{that} is the mistake/you make. I know a little bit about that too, I'm in some type of work like this. So you know a great deal more about my mistakes, than you do about anything that I might have done right. The only one who knows about the other is my mother. And by the way, I think she's more honest than the reports.

Anyway, I wanted to compliment the National Guard for its work in several States. I noticed the splendid work of the Wisconsin Air Guardsmen for the St. John's School for the Deaf. I noticed that many units of our National Guard sponsored Christmas programs for needy children, Toys for Tots. Pennsylvania, Tennessee, just to mention a couple States, New York where the 106th Military Airlift Group of Brooklyn came with 1600 crippled children and gave a party at their air base. Louisiana's Air Guardsmen for the crippled children's hospital. The Alaska Guardsmen for what they did for the Eskimo children, the native children of St. Mary's Mission. Operation Health Service by Florida's Army National Guard. Operation Head Start by New York. California Air Guardsmen, what they did for blind teenagers and young adults in the Braille Institute. And Kansas Guardsmen who coached the team which won the Jaycee's International B-B Gun Championship. The Georgia Guardsmen and their work in firearm safety. Oh my, I could go right on. District of Columbia Guardsmen now active in sponsoring programs similar to that of the West Virginia and Utah Guards program for emphasis on leadership in young people in sports activities and limited military training. Operation Success by Florida's Army National Guard. And the children out in Mansfield, Ohio, about 500 elementary school children who were helped in that wonderful program. Washington National Guardsmen sponsored the State-wide collection of clothing for the Save the Children Foundation. Connecticut companies worked raising funds for the March of Dimes. North Carolina National Guard in Operation Appreciation, the kids and their families were brought to the State Fair, that is the families of those serving in Viet Nam. This is just a few of the things. I should ^{not} ~~be~~ even getting into one State after another because every State has done something.

Well, I know what you've done and I know last year that you helped us with 70,000 youngsters -- young people -- who received support from the National Guard. Now in June of last year I met with General Wilson and we talked about what you could do for the Youth Opportunity Program, and that's why I'm here.

I'm ~~President~~ Chairman of the President's Youth Opportunity Council. Now, we've been at work for three years -- ^{first on} ~~this is~~ an ad hoc ^{basis} operation -- but last year the President put it together on the basis of an Executive Order. Now that Council consists of the top officials of this government that have any programs at all that relate to young people from the Defense Department, from ~~the~~ Health, Education and Welfare, from the Office of Economic Opportunity. And we are mounting this year the greatest program we've ever had for Summer programs for young people. Schools let out in late May or early June, I don't know why it is that we look upon a school plant as a nine-month operation, I guess it must be because that's the cycle for birth, but schools have no reason not to be open twelve months a year. Every playground, every gymnasium, every swimming pool out to be available to the youngsters of America year round. These schools do not belong to the superintendents, and they do not belong to the school board, they belong to the people. Now we ought to find that what we really need is just enough administrative funds to properly staff some of those facilities. Cause today is a different day than when I was a boy -- when I was a boy I didn't have to worry much about what I was going to do in the Summer, my father had me at work. But there aren't many corner drug stores left and according to one officer who felt are too many, I don't agree with that.

Most of us -- most of you that I look at in this audience grew up at a time as a boy when your father, or your grandfather, or your uncle could include you somewhere on the farm or in the local business ~~alongside~~ alongside of him and there was work to do. Now what would you think if I bring my boys down here to work alongside me, there'd be an article in the paper called nepotism. And if I happened to give them a job, they'd ~~say~~ say it was political privilege, and that's a fact. I remember one time I had a nephew of mine whose father died in war -- Korea -- and he went and got himself a job because he was just a poor boy and did not go to school. He got himself ^{working} a job/as a janitor in the Post Office, and I had a whole Summer full of newspaper articles about that nephew of the Vice President who was on a Federal government payroll. ~~XXX~~ I didn't even know where he was working. The poor fellow was broken hearted, he was going to quit. And I said don't you let them scare you out, son, this is the first good test, stick with them, tell them to go you know where. But just image what it is to try to pick a job for a young kid this time of year. You can't take your son along to the General Motors assembly plant, they just won't make it possible. They've got to have a fellow there turning on bolt 40B and slapping on the fender. There's no ^{little} place for/Johnny.

And most of us today -- most of the adults today -- work for large companies or work in government installations where our children cannot be with us. Therefore, we need activities for young people. Because if you think atom power is powerful just take a good look at youth power. There's more concentrated/^{energy}~~energy~~ in a 1,000 youngsters than there are in all the atom bombs put together. And what they need is direction -- what they need is -- they need to be wanted. They need to have something they know is

important to do. They need to have activity, to utilize that energy, to give them during that period of time when they're not in school some proper utilization of those tremendous resources of energy and talent that is there. Otherwise, it goes to bad -- something that's not good, to something that's bad. This is what we mean by the youth -- the explosive power of idle youth ~~xx~~ on the street corner. And it'll happen to white or black. All the delinquency is not amongst the poor, I can tell you that. A good lot of it is amongst the sons and daughters of the rich. As a matter of fact it's very difficult to be a son or daughter of a rich man. What can you do? accept to get rich. They have more troubles sometimes than the poor.

So we're trying to find a way~~x~~ and a means ~~xx~~ across this country, ~~but~~ not by the Federal government doing it but by the Federal government encouraging local people, local private groups, local government to get young people active, and to harness that energy for wholesome purposes in the training of physical fitness, the improvement of the mind, the development of skills, and gainful employment. And it's a tremendous undertaking, but I can tell you that there ^{and} is no hope for America until we find a way to put to work --/to constructive use -- the tremendous energy of young people. And the greatest area of unemployment in this country is not amongst adults -- the area of unemployment that concerns America today is between the ages of 16 and 21. That's where the unemployment is. That's where the idleness is and that's where the mischief can become constructive.

Isn't it interesting that a society that produces \$800 billion dollars of goods and services can't produce jobs for a 17 year old boy, enough jobs and enough constructive/^{work}~~good~~ to absorb his potential and to absorb his energy. ^{you've got} Now if you haven't a job/~~you have~~ to have something else, you have to have him busy, in some kind of community work, ~~in~~ or _____ work, in athletics, in

recreation, in what we call the cultural enrichment programs, in remedial reading and keeping him somehow occupied on something he knows is worthwhile for him, and where somebody cares. His personal touch.

One of the reasons that government programs frequently are not successful, even though there's millions of dollars put into them, is that it lacks the personal touch. I've been a Scout Master and I know about what I speak. I've worked with youth all my life, well of it. They'll respond at the power like a seed responds to fertile soil, they'll just blossom, if given the chance. And the ones that look like they'd be last to blossom are the first. The kid that is sometimes the most depressed -- the one that seems to be the farthest out -- if he just gets a little help, a little care and a little love and a little attention and a little correction and a little firm manly guidance -- and he needs some of that -- manly guidance. He'll come to and he'll shape up, as we say. And they want to, believe me, if there's one thing about this generation that I've learned it's they want to be needed. They want somebody to talk to them. They want somebody to not only talk to them but even at times to be firm with them. They actually resent the permissiveness of the time, when you get right down to it.

So I come to you, as officers, to help us. I ask you to open up these National Guard armories . Now you've got regulations that say you can but here's what the problem is. You talk about red tape, we know a lot about it down here, we create it. Red tape. Now if you have to go off to the governor and to the State Adjutant General every time that you're going to use the men's room in the local armory, well, you're going to have a lot of trouble. I can be more explicit. The fact of the matter is, you have to give authority to National Guard Guard your local/commanding officer for that local/commanding officer to be able to turn over the facilities under proper arrangements with the local authorities

that are engaged in the Youth Opportunity Program. Let the Guard become a part of the youth movement of America -- that's where you get your volunteers. I might even be so blunt as to say these are your customers. And don't make the National Guard like we've made some of the public schools, like you own it, because you don't. The National Guard belongs to the people. You have a responsibility for the facilities, for the training of the men. But that responsibility also goes down to the potentials, as many of these young boys that we're talking about right now are going to be in our National Guard, and what a wonderful thing it would be if they knew that the National Guard armory was also their gymnasium. That at least once a week -- or twice a week -- that the facilities were open. You've got showers, you've got the toilets, you've got the ventilation, you have the gymnasium facilities and we need it desperately. Instead of ^{going} having people ~~go~~/out and pass new bond issues to build playgrounds -- we've already got playgrounds you know -- I found out that, as I've said to some of the people in Washington, you have to learn how to make ~~them~~ do.

The average public school in America, for example, is used six hours a day. Well I want to tell you something, ^{if} General Motors only used its plant six hours a day it'd be the ~~biggest~~ biggest welfare client that the Government of the United States has. Good grief, I was brought up around a drug store where we worked 18 hours a day, we've cut that back to 12 now, under recent pressures, but my job I have to put in 16 a day to even get caught up on correspondence, much less do anything.

But, we've simply got to use these facilities. And I ask you to help us. Now there are 2500 of them and if we can get those facilities open -- I don't mean just reluctantly -- but I mean wholeheartedly -- we're going to

help some young people stay out of trouble this Summer. I want the National Guard not to only be required to help^{the}/riot control, which you are, but I want you to be required to help in youth opportunity. That's the other side of the coin. And believe me it won't hurt those facilities at all. Those old armories are built to take any kind of abuse.

Now we were up at New Brunswick, New Jersey, last Fall and the National Guard that's there turned over one of the armories to us, made it into a youth center. It was an old armory, and some of them are pretty old as you know. But at least you can, during those Summer months, make it a temporary youth center without interrupting your training. I know that's your first obligation, I'm not unmindful of that, but to utilize the time. Now there may be equipment, for example, one of the things that we needed in Chicago and I believe the National Guard did help in the Chicago area to get the trucks, and busses to transport kids out of the inner State down to Lake Michigan, down to the parks, down to the swimming pools, down to the lake front.

One of the real problems in this country is that we have people living off one place and we have the living facilities some place else, even the working facilities. The greatest problem we have in the so-called ghettos today is that even if we try to get a hard core unemployed man a job there isn't any place for him to work near his neighborhood, because there isn't any business there. We have these sort of flophouse areas. Now our European friends have learned a lot better in building their new cities, new towns. They put the industry -- they put the business -- right around where people live. Just exactly like in some countries you have a little rural village right around the land that is to be cultivated. But we've got an urban society in which the jobs are 40 miles away from the bedroom, or 40 miles away

from the kitchen and the parlor, and the poor, and the hard core unemployed, and the needy, and the kids of that family just don't have the facilities and some times the vocation, and frequently it's the motivation,^{the} /~~ix~~ get up and go.

So we've got to have ~~facilities~~ facilities. Now there are times, for example, that we may want to build a new baseball diamond. You've got some earth moving equipment, I've seen a little of it around, you know. And, you ought to try it out occasionally, to see if it still operates. You do, I know. But I'm just trying to think what I saw out at Hurons, South Dakota, at the airport. A lot of National Guard equipment out there near the airport. I've forgotten just what the nature^{of} /it is, but it's heavy equipment. Now some of you have heavy equipment, some of you don't. But if there's a need of a new park, a new playground and a new baseball diamond that needs to be put up quickly for kids and you have the equipment, volunteer. That's ~~what~~ the way you ask folks to come to the National Guard, volunteer, and you volunteered your turn.

Go to the Governor, go to the Mayor, you're all out there, most of you, stationed near great cities. Go to your Mayor when you come back from this meeting and say listen I just talked to the Vice President and in this instance he has been delegated by the President to speak for the President of the United States and the Vice President has said that he wants the National Guard to volunteer in the Youth Opportunity Program. Mayor, I'm here, I salute, I volunteer. And I've got the Mayors waiting for me this coming week and they'll be after you. So, I guess you got my message. What I want you to do is not to be just waiting for somebody, I want you to take the lead as they used to say, take the bull by the horns, go to it, because I predict something

for you, you're going to catch a lot of complaints and stuff, most likely. I want you to be able to say listen we're not only Guardsmen but we're also citizens deeply interested not only in law and order, but interested in promoting the conditions of a society that is conducive to law and order. Because the pressing dangers, Gentlemen, are not enough alone. Even though we know we cannot condone violence, we cannot possibly have our cities torn apart. There is a way and a means in this country for a redress of aggrevances through normal peaceful processes, and it ought to be manifested clear that we intend to have observance of law in this Nation. But we also have to make it equally clear that the prime purpose of our society is to develop the conditions that make it possible for everybody to have his chance, for everyone to share in equal opportunity, every man his right to work, to live, and to be himself, and to be, as that great poet Thomas Wolfe wrote, ~~to be~~ whatever it is man can within his vision combine to make him, this is the promise of America. That's what this country's all about.

Whatever you can do to engage young people in the jobs, some of you work with great industries, help us -- help them. Remember, a better America is not entirely what happens in Washington. A better America is what happens where you live. America is the sum-total of every township, precinct, town, village, city, hamlet, county and State all added up. And if there's going to be a more peaceful and ^{happier} ~~happy~~ America it's going to be because you made a little contribution to it where you live. If there's going to be more jobs in America for the people who need work it's going to be because where you live somebody did something about it. If there's going to be a more just and a more humane America, it going to be because you did something about it where you live.

There's so many people who look to Washington to do everything. I think this is one of the real tragedies of our time. I'm one of those that ^{that} believes/^{that} even if the Federal government could do it all it shouldn't, because that's a sure way to destroy self-reliance, and self-respect. This great America of ours must have leadership at every level of human activity and it must have responsibility at every level of human activity. We cannot look just to the President and the Congress and Washington for leadership and for guidance, for resources and for programs. As a matter of fact, Washington ought to be looking out the country for leadership, guidance and programs. That's where it ought to start. That's my philosophy and I think it's right.

I served as Mayor of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and I didn't expect much out of Washington and I'm happy to tell you I didn't get much either. I'm not happy to tell you, I'm sorry to tell you I should say I didn't get much. But we try to take care of our own problems, and some of my friends here know it. When we didn't have housing for our returned veterans, I got busy in my town to see that there was housing. It wasn't much but it was better than nothing. I'll never forget the time I took over a public/^{park}~~plant~~, right after the war, and some of the local folks were pretty mad. They said what do you mean putting up quonset huts in that park. It hadn't been developed as a park yet, the war had stopped that, but it had been purchased under option for a park. And I said, now if you don't like it you just get yourself another candidate for Mayor because in the mean time/^{I've}~~I've~~ been elected and I intend to carry it through. And what's more is some of you folks out here, out around here, need a little family music. And these young vets are coming back and there's a lot of new population coming in and they're going to have those kids hollering and screaming all night long, it'll be good for you, make you feel

young again. And we put up the quonsets. I didn't get any help out of Washington. And we had to do a lot of those things and I want us to do that again. I want to see our local governments, our States, I want to see our localities just take this thing and say listen am I going to be proud of my State, say that, We're going to have a record here in our State Guard that we can come down here next year and tell the President and the Vice President and the Congress, listen, we got a little touchup down here ~~last year~~ by the Vice President last year and we've come back to give you a report. We've done twice as much as we did the year before. If you do that much, that's pretty good. I doubt that I could do as good.

don't know
I ~~do~~/~~na~~ if there's anything else -- oh ~~year~~, yes, I want to mention one other thing to you here, I've got a little note, my staff always tells me all the things I ought to bear down on.

Let's not worry about those fees for these facilities. I know they're going to cost you something. That's your contribution. Just don't keep too many lawyers around now on this deal. Just make an understanding, we get too many of these fine prints, fill all that paper and four copies and the next thing you know there'll never be a kid who will ever get in side, they'll still be arguing about the third paragraph under Article III. Minimal fees if you have to have a fee to keep it legal, make it a couple of dollars. That'll work. Two dollar bills are scarce anyhow.

So just offer what you have, and do that without any charge[?]. Now you put the orders out to your local commanders, your local officers, and say don't bother me now about whether or not little Johnny can go to the toilet or not in that armory and don't bother me about whether/they can play basketball on as to Tuesday night and don't bother me/~~about~~ whether or not you can have a youth

we have to have
program in there on Thursday afternoon. You know the nights/and the days
we have to have the armory for training, on those days nobody's to bother us.
On the other days you do it as the Mayor and you and the local community
leaders, the Reverends and whoever else is around, you do it the way you
figure it out, save a lot of paper work, and what's more you'll have a
great report. And then when the boys start criticizing you for doing your
duty, you just bring out a 40 page report next year. And I'll get up and
read it for all the critics. Thank you very very much.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org