

Paym Sue Zerkel  
Sue Freeman  
Dr. Ralston

505 State  
Pawnee River  
10 miles from  
Canada

## NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

1968

NATIONAL 4-H CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

APRIL 22, 1968

38th  
annual  
conference

Future -  
don't  
work

(Deaper Brigade) Team

You have picked a good time for a look at the future  
and your role in it.

For a great deal about America's future is going to  
be decided this year.

It is an election year, yes.

But even more important, it is a year when individual  
Americans must decide how much personal commitment we  
are willing to devote to building the kind of nation we  
started out to build.

Nation Building is our  
business

~~OK~~ (Pardes - monument)  
-2-  
(my measure)

We have enormous resources of talent and wealth.

We have a considerable public commitment to programs --  
and they are mostly good ones -- designed to improve the health,  
welfare, education and opportunities of American citizens.

└ But you can't legislate national unity.

└ You can't legislate discrimination out of people's hearts.

└ You can't legislate that sense of private commitment to  
the public good which is the lifeblood of democracy.

Individuals either make that commitment or they don't.

And their community and their nation thrive or wither  
accordingly. (~~Pardes~~) ~~monument~~

└ Take those rural communities most of you represent  
as an example.

Yes, there are federal programs. President Johnson has signed 184 measures designed to boost farm income, attract industry, train workers, develop resources, improve education and recreation in rural areas.

↳ Most of you have seen some of those programs at work, along with many state and county programs. ↳ They represent America's public effort to increase the opportunities available to all of you and your neighbors.

↳ But public effort is only the beginning.

Opportunity "moves in" where local citizens demonstrate a determination to see their own communities grow.

↳ If you want to attract business and industry, show them clean communities, active civic groups and churches, good schools -- things that prove you care about your future.

Show them a community where there is <sup>private</sup> pride in  
public achievements.

Show them a community with a future.

Now I don't want to be accused of giving this speech  
to the wrong audience.

The very fact that you are here today means you are  
already deeply committed to the future of your communities.

Moreover, I am aware that most young Americans are  
future-builders -- some of the best our country has.

I noticed the other day, for example, that VISTA applications  
are up 54 per cent in the last three months. As Chairman  
of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity I have had  
a lot of contact with disadvantaged young people who are  
doing more to help themselves and their communities  
than their country has done in the past to help them.

*"If a person has nothing to do for  
his country, he will have no love for it."*

But there is a certain amount of disunity, frustration and aimless negativism in America today. There are people who weigh our problems more heavily than our opportunities, and despair.

There are people who trust their fears and not their hopes. -

↳ There are people who sell America short, and hurt its chances in the process.

I believe it is time for a New American Patriotism.

...Not flag-waving, sloganeering, marching patriotism -- although that can be good clean fun *and so good + proper*

...But a deeper patriotism that includes:

-- a faith in this nation's future,

-- pride in our opportunities as well as our

accomplishments,

-- determination to eliminate the very real  
and serious blemishes that still deface our democracy

-- and quiet personal confidence that America can  
truly become "one nation, under God, with liberty  
and justice for all."

# # #

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Federal Extension Service

I was very happy to be introduced by my good friend, Orville Freeman, the Secretary of Agriculture. When he started to tell us a little bit about his association with Hubert Humphrey, I was getting a little nervous. Because, I'm always afraid that he'll tell all.

I think I should tell you, however, that back in those days of which he was speaking, when I served as mayor of Minneapolis, the youngest Civil Service Commissioner in the United States was the chairman of the Minneapolis Civil Service Commission, none other than Orville Freeman.

We had a lot of old-timers in that organization. My assistant was 21 years of age. Today he is mayor of Minneapolis. The chairman of the Board of County Commissioners was 23 -- a Board of Commissioners that governed a community of almost a million people. I, at the time, was the old man of the organization. I was 34.

They called this illustrious crowd Humphrey's Diaper Brigade. So you can see that our association with you is not so peripheral. We were the involved young people of our time.

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Remarks of The Honorable Hubert Humphrey, Vice President of the United States, at the opening of National 4-H Conference, April 22, 1968, Washington, D.C.

Now I want to talk to you this morning. I want to get a look at you. And I'm going to listen to what you have to say and hear your reports because I have a special interest in what you're going to do. After all, you're going to be in charge of my Medicare and I want to know what you're up to.

So, if you notice that Secretary Freeman and Hubert Humphrey and Dr. Ralston and others are giving you a quizzical look, it's only because we're just worried lest you forget us. We want to be sure that you're going to take good care of things.

I'm going to talk to you a little bit about the future. Albert Einstein once said that he didn't talk much about it because it came too fast anyway. There's an old British cynic and novelist, that some of you may have read of, who **once said he had peered** into the future. And then he said it won't work. Now, I hope that's not the case today because we've got quite a bit invested in the future.

When Bob Hope was here speaking to Georgetown University commencement about two years ago, he said, "Now, my advice to you young graduates about to go out into the world is don't go!" But I guess there isn't any way we can stop you. You're going to go and I'm happy that you're going to go. You've picked a mighty good time to look at the future, and your role in it. The truth is that your role is the future. One of the courses that I always enjoyed as a student, and subsequently had a chance to teach was American History.

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But more important than learning history is living it, and making your own. Make your own history! Make your own future! For a great deal about America's future is in your hands. And more importantly, a great deal of it's going to be decided this year.

Oh, I know you're thinking, he means it's an election year. That's right, that's part of the process of our future. But I think there's something even more important than that, vital as the processes of self government are.

It is a year, this year of 1968, when individual -- and I repeat, individual Americans -- must decide how much personal -- I repeat, how much personal -- commitment you are willing to devote to make this country of ours the kind of a nation that we started out to build; the kind of nation that you said it was this morning as our young friend led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States.

I hope that when we said that pledge, we understood exactly what we were saying. I noticed that most everybody knew the words. I hope we also understand their meaning -- and the commitment that goes with them.

What a tragedy it would be if young Americans, above all others, were to learn the words and never learn the spirit of the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Because the Pledge of Allegiance is a powerful message -- a message yet to be fulfilled. "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

You can do nothing more important in the few days you have here in your nation's capital, than to ask yourself if you believe what you repeated...if you've dedicated your life to its realization...if what you've learned is in your heart as well as in your mind. The symbolism and the commitment of the 4-H clubs tells us that it has to be in heart, in head, and it has to be in the hands in order for it to be really meaningful. Then it gives health to this nation.

The one theme of my private and public life -- the one thing that I want to realize if the Lord gives me time to do it -- is to see that this nation is but one nation, not north and south, east and west, not black and white, not two societies separate and unequal.

One nation, and a nation that recognizes its humility before God Almighty...a nation that is indivisible -- in which there is one citizenship -- a citizenship of liberty and justice for all, with rights and responsibilities, privileges and duties. There are no rights without responsibilities, and there obviously are no privileges that will endure without the fulfillment of duties.

So I believe that's really what you're talking about, and I think that's what the 4-H Club is all about. I came close to becoming a member of a 4-H Club, but my folks didn't give me enough initials. I'm 3-H.

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I happen to believe that nation building is your business -- the building of a fine nation. And that's why I started off as I did this morning. This is the challenge of 1968, and this is going to be the challenge of the last third of the twentieth century -- your third. That's when you're going to be at the zenith of your power and effectiveness.

The story is told that Pericles of Athens, in his later years, came across a young lawyer of Athens who was deeply devoted to causes, many causes, and who wished to change immediately what was wrong in the world. Indeed that's the spirit of young people. Now Pericles, the older and senior statesman, chastised the young man for being too bold and too brash, for concerning himself with things better left, as he said, to older men. The older man, Pericles, patronizingly said to the younger man, "Of course young man, I understand, for I too was overeager in my youth. But now that I am older I have learned better. Take my advice and do not become so involved." At this point, the young man replied, "Pericles, my hero Pericles, I regret I did not have the privilege of knowing you when you were at your best."

What insight -- "of knowing you at your best,"...when you saw the inequities of life and wanted to do something about them...when you saw injustice and wanted to make justice prevail...when you saw a divided nation and wanted to unify that nation.

That's what the young Athenian wanted and Pericles admonished him, don't become too involved.

(more)

I admonish you this morning. Become very involved, very, very involved.

This is your country and it'll be your country longer than any of your critics. Because your critics will long be dead and gone when it's still your country. Is it not true that an inheritance is a waste unless it is added onto? No one has the right to use up a heritage, everyone has the obligation to be its steward and to add just a little bit to it.

Well, you know we have such enormous resources in this country to deal with, enormous resources of talent and wealth, and we have considerable public commitment too, to making this a better country. Public commitments have been made here by you, by the Extension Service, by your government in all of its branches, designed to improve the health, the welfare, the education, the opportunities of American citizens.

But I tell you nothing new when I tell you you cannot legislate unity. You can legislate standards that hopefully might unite the people, but you cannot legislate unity, you cannot legislate morality, you cannot legislate discrimination out of people's hearts. You cannot legislate that sense of private commitment to the public good, which is the lifeblood of democracy.

Individuals either make that commitment or they don't. And their community and their nation thrive or wither accordingly. I think you can best understand what I speak of when you think of where you live.

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There are federal programs, President Johnson has signed 184 measures designed to boost the farm income, attract industry, train workers and develop resources. This Department of Agriculture has done more in these recent years to really bring a better quality of life to rural America than at any other time. But yet, the man that introduced me would be the first one to say that we've barely scratched the surface.

He would be the first to say that what we're doing is learning by doing. He would be the first to say that we must do much more and we must be willing to experiment and to try, but above all that we must be willing to tap into the great resource that you represent with your ideas and your momentum, your strength, and your purpose.

Most of you have seen some of these public programs at work. They represent America's public effort to increase opportunities available to all of you and your neighbors. Because, quite frankly, if we're going to have a better rural America, a better America every place, we must bring to that part of America, indeed to all of America, the benefits of modern society. Secretary Freeman, the Vice President, and others in our government are charged by the President with trying to find ways and means of getting what we call a better balance of urban and rural America.

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Some of us really believe that one of the greatest services that we can perform to urban America is to make what we call rural America much more attractive, a better place in which to live; in which there are the best of schools and medical care, cultural institutions and job opportunities; in which farm income is a good income; in which people can earn a good living.

We must be thinking of good opportunities for good living. I believe that I can say this to a very sophisticated realistic audience. Young people are leaving rural America by the thousands; not because they don't like that part of the country, but because they think they see someplace else with better opportunities. Now, this is not good for our nation. We need to make sure that America has good opportunities every place. Or we'll be grappling with the ever growing complex problems of metropolitan and urban America for years to come and never catching up.

I want to see every man have his chance. Really, that ought to be the slogan in America -- Every Man His Chance. Every man the right to live, to work, and to make it himself; whatever his vision and his manhood permit him to make of himself. To every man his golden opportunity, wherever he may be. This should be the promise of America. And unless we do it, unless we make that promise a reality, our nation will be plagued with ever-increasing difficulties.

So my young friends, become the community leaders. Show that your community has a future.

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Now I know that I may be accused of giving the right speech to the wrong audience. The very fact that you're here today means that you're deeply committed to the future of your communities.

You are the future. Moreover, I am very much aware that most young Americans are future builders, some of the best this country has. And, I am pleased that Secretary Freeman noted that I've gone the length and breadth of this country and talked about the volunteer generation. Because my candid view is that you haven't received the kind of public notice that you ought to have.

All too often, American youth is identified with acts of extremism rather than with the constructive, progressive, innovative, creative programs, policies and thoughts you represent in this audience this morning. All across this vast land, there are millions and millions of students hard at work. There are over 7 million of our young Americans in universities. And last year over half a million of those university students contributed freely of their time to helping the underprivileged. An equal number from our high schools volunteered. This almost goes unnoticed. But the hippie, or the person that seems to get in trouble, he makes the news.

I happen to think that the best news of America is sometimes the quietest performance -- that steady continuous performance by individuals and groups that build for a better life. That doesn't mean you're an old fogey at all. It means that you're a young progressive; progressing, day in and day out.

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I noticed the other day, for example, speaking of the future builders - the nation builders - of America, that VISTA applications, Volunteers in Service to America, are up 54 percent in the last three months. Now that's a tough assignment; that's our Peace Corps at home.

I've seen our Peace Corps young men and women all over the world. I've seen the work of the 4-H Club all over the world. It's not easy work, and sometimes it goes so unnoticed. You see, I'm one that believes in what the scriptures say, "Blessed are the peace makers." You make peace; building it block by block, stone by stone, inch by inch, foot by foot, mile by mile, slowly, patiently.

As John Kennedy once said, peace is a lonely struggle. And yet sometimes those who seem to get the greatest notice for peace are not those who are making it, but those who are disturbing it.

I think the 4-H Clubs of America have done more at home to build for a united America, for a society of social justice, for a peaceful society, for a growing society, for a better America, than almost all the peace talkers and peace walkers I have seen. You're the peace workers.

And all over the world there are people like you in shirt-sleeves, and sometimes even in uniforms, that believe that peace is worth working for. And that sometimes, indeed if need be, peace is worth dying for. Peace is the work of brave men and women. It's not the work of the timid and the cowardly. It requires infinite

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patience, dogged perserverance, almost superhuman courage. But it's being done.

I'm privileged to serve as chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity. And I see things happening across America, my young friends, that gladden my heart. I've seen literally thousands of lives saved by youth programs and youth activity and self involvement. What greater blessing is there, what greater honor, than being able to save a life, even if it's your own.

It's happening. Young men and women who are lost -- no jobs, illiterate, sick, discouraged, worried, bitter, filled with hate -- and yet today they are on jobs, they are working, they are helping, they've found a new life. There are yet many more who need to find that new life. What is important is that we have made the start.

A very famous man once told us if a person has nothing to do for his country, he shall have no love for it. Involvement means having a piece of the action, as the young people say. If you have something to do for your country, if you're involved in it, you'll love it. If you have nothing to do, how can you love it?

Our task, every one of us, is to see to it that everyone in this country has a chance to be a part of the action, a part of what's going on.

I've met some young people who are pretty old. They're really ready for Geritol, and Medicare, and Social Security. They haven't had a new idea and don't want one. And I've met some old people who are pretty young.

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They tell the story about Oliver Wendell Holmes and Justice Brandeis here in Washington, two of the famous old jurists of the Supreme Court. They were in their 80's and they were walking down 16th Street one day after the offices all let out. The beautiful young secretaries were walking by and Justice Brandeis saw something walk by that looked very attractive. He turned his head quickly and he said to Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Boy, what would I give to be 70 again."

That's youth. And, I've seen some young fellows walk by and they just kept their heads to the ground, missing all the moving beauty. I read once a good definition of youth. I'll share it with you because I think it tells the whole story. Youth is not just a time of life. It is a state of mind. We grow old only by deserting our ideals. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt. You are as young as your self confidence, as old as your fear. You are as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

That's the real definition of youth. And when you're filled with doubts, and fear, and despair, even if you're age 18, you've had it; you're over the hill, you're gone. The best days of your life, if ever any, have already been lived. But you can be an Oliver Wendell Holmes or a Justice Brandeis or other greats of America and still be a young person.

Benjamin Franklin, that great patriot of America, even in his eighties, was younger than most of the young revolutionaries who were in their twenties. He was the man that saw the rising sun rather

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than the setting sun at the constitutional convention. His younger compatriots thought the sun was setting. Franklin said, oh no, this American republic is the rising sun. He was a young man.

I know there's a certain amount of disunity in our country ...of frustration and aimless negativism in America today. We hear about it all the time. There are people who weigh our problems more heavily than they weigh our opportunities; who embrace despair as if it were their long-lost friend. Sometimes those people feel they are showing concern. I think they show a disproportionate negativism.

There are people who trust their fears and not their hopes. And, there are people who sell America short and hurt its chances in the process. There are those people, and they gain a disproportionate amount of attention for their sense of despair and hopelessness, and I think their pessimism.

I call on you to do better. I believe it's time for a new American patriotism. A new American patriotism, not just the patriotism of flag waving or sloganeering, or even marching patriotism, although all that is good. Just as we had it here this morning, and just as this band portrays it and just as the honor guard symbolizes it

There should be another patriotism, a new American patriotism that encompasses all that we have seen and heard here today. It encompasses Old Glory. It encompasses the Pledge of Allegiance, the Star Spangled Banner, the

(more)

Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. Yes, that's patriotism, but onto that there is a new dimension -- a deeper patriotism, that includes a faith in a nation's future...pride in our opportunities as well as our accomplishments...determination to eliminate the very real and serious blemishes that still deface our democracy...a quiet, almost reverent personal confidence that America can truly become one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

This is the song of America -- march to it with your own cadence. In a sense, be your own drummer boy, beating out your own step. But march confidently, because the history of this nation gives you every reason to be confident, without being arrogant; to be proud without being boastful; to be resolute without being belligerent.

That's the new American patriotism -- proud in humility, confident without arrogance, resolute and firm without being belligerent or bellicose. And, my young Americans, so much depends on every one of us. So much depends on us now to bind up the wounds in this country...to give people their chance to be heard...to make everyone a participant in this great experience of democracy.

And I can't think of a better group to lead the fight than a people who have a head, and heart, and hands, and health dedicated to the proposition of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all of us. Good luck and have a good conference. We'll be listening to you. Thank you so much.

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