

000097

SUPERMARKET INSTITUTE PANEL

MIAMI, FLORIDA

JANUARY 12, 1971

000098

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE ADDRESSING THE LEADERS
OF A SECTOR OF THE CONSUMER ECONOMY WHOSE PRICES
HAVE SHOWN INCREASING STABILITY. WHOLESALE FOOD
PRICES ARE DECLINING, WHILE RETAIL PRICES HAVE
STABILIZED. I TRUST THESE FIGURES ARE INDICATIVE
OF MARKET STABILITY IN THE INDUSTRY -- A STABILITY
THAT CAN BE AN EXAMPLE ACROSS THE BOARD -- TO
MANUFACTURING, PROCESSING AND SERVICES --
PARTICULARLY SERVICES.

WE HAVE MANY PROBLEMS FACING THIS NATION IN
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. MOST OF THEM ARE PERENNIAL:
WAR AND PEACE, THE HEALTH OF THE ECONOMY,
RESTORATION OF OUR ECOLOGY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN NEEDS,
CRIME, AND SO ON.

HOWEVER, ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS ARE OF
CRISIS PROPORTIONS TODAY. AND WHILE THEY
REPRESENT THE SPECTRUM OF OUR NATIONAL
ILLS, THEIR FOCUS OR DIFFRACTION POINT IS
ONE AND THE SAME: PRESENT GOVERNMENTAL
STRUCTURES HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE
THE NECESSARY RESPONSE AND LEADERSHIP TO
SOLVE THEM. FEDERAL STATE AND LOCAL
GOVERNING BODIES HAVE BARELY BEEN ABLE TO
MAINTAIN A RATHER SHABBY STATUS-QUO -- AND
MANY HAVE BEGUN TO BACKSLIDE. THE WORSENING
CONDITIONS OF OUR MAJOR METROPOLITAN
CENTERS BEAR WITNESS TO THAT FACT.

-3-

THERE IS INDEED A CRISIS OF GOVERNMENT
IN AMERICA. THE AMERICAN FEDERAL SYSTEM --
OUR ENTIRE DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE -- IS
FACING ITS MOMENT OF TRUTH.

TO PUT IT DIRECTLY, CAN OUR GOVERNMENTAL
AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS COPE WITH THE
NEW DEMANDS, AS WELL AS THE AGE-OLD PROBLEMS
OF A HIGHLY MOBILE, URBANIZED, INDUSTRIALIZED,
AND HETEROGENEOUS SOCIETY? THIS IS THE
FOCUS OF OUR PROBLEMS -- RESPONSIVENESS OF
GOVERNMENT TO THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE.

YOU ALL KNOW WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT.
EVERY DAY YOU SEE THE DISTURBING RESULTS OF
THIS CREEPING GOVERNMENTAL PARALYSIS.

OUR CITIES ARE VICTIMIZED BY NOISE, POLLUTION,
TRAFFIC CONGESTION, SLUMS, RACIAL STRIFE,
VIOLENCE AND CRIME. DEMANDS FOR SOCIAL AND
HUMAN NEEDS, LAW ENFORCEMENT, WELFARE,
HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION ARE RACING AHEAD,
FAR OUTSTRIPPING REVENUES PLANNED FOR
THEM.

OUR CITIES AND STATES ARE IN A
DESPERATE FINANCIAL CRISIS. REVENUES ARE
ALWAYS FALLING BEHIND EXPENDITURES -- THE
URBAN TAX BASE HAS BEEN BOTH ERODED AND
STRETCHED TO THE BREAKING POINT.

OUR TOTAL DOMESTIC CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY
IS GREATLY WORSENERD BY OVER-COMMITMENT AND
UNDER-PERFORMANCE.

THE CONGRESS AND THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
PRODUCE LAW AFTER LAW DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE
THE FULFILLMENT OF THE BASIC NEEDS AND
ASPIRATIONS OF ALL AMERICANS: THE EMPLOYMENT
ACT OF 1946, THE HOUSING ACT OF 1949 AND
1968, THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1965, THE
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1964, THE CIVIL
RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, AND THE NATIONAL
ENVIRONMENT POLICY ACT OF 1970. BUT AFTER
RAISING HIGH THE HOPES OF AMERICA, WE
GRADUALLY DASH THEM THROUGH FAILURE TO
CARRY THROUGH. THE END PRODUCT IS A FAILURE
TO DELIVER ON THE SERIES OF NATIONAL COMMITMENTS
SO SOLEMNLY MADE -- AND SO QUICKLY FORGOTTEN.

6

BUT WHAT MUST AND CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

I FIRST MUST STRESS THE ABSOLUTE
IMPERATIVE OF RESTORING OUR ECONOMY TO ITS
FULL PRODUCTIVITY. RIGHT NOW, WE ARE
SACRIFICING APPROXIMATELY \$50 BILLION IN
GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT PER CALENDAR YEAR --
AND THIS TRAGIC LOSS UNDERCUTS EVERYTHING
ELSE THAT WE, AS A NATION, MAY ATTEMPT TO DO.

FISCAL AND MONETARY FINE TUNING CANNOT
DO THE JOB ALONE -- THAT HAS BEEN AMPLY
DEMONSTRATED -- AT GREAT HUMAN AND ECONOMIC
SACRIFICE. AN UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURE OF 6% FOR
DECEMBER SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

I URGE THE PRESIDENT TO INSTITUTE AN INFORMED AND VIGOROUS INCOMES POLICY TO ENLIST THE COOPERATION OF LABOR AND MANAGEMENT IN DAMPENING THE WAGE-PRICE SPIRAL. BOTH LABOR AND MANAGEMENT THEMSELVES HAVE CALLED FOR JUST SUCH A POLICY.

NEXT, WE MUST ACCELERATE OUR EFFORTS TO REDESIGN AND REVITALIZE THE FEDERAL SYSTEM. UNLESS WE ACHIEVE A GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE THAT ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY TODAY, OUR BEST EFFORTS IN EVERY OTHER AREA WILL INEVITABLY FALL SHORT.

WE NEED TO UPDATE THE CONGRESS TO GEAR THE MACHINERY OF CONGRESS TO THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE.

CONGRESS DESPERATELY NEEDS A JOINT
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES
IN ORDER TO SEE THE BROADER PICTURE OF WHAT
MUST BE DONE. ALSO NEEDED IS A CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY. CONGRESS,
IN ORDER TO BE RESPONSIVE IN A TIMELY
FASHION TO INTERNATIONAL CRISES MUST BE
CONTINUALLY UP-TO-DATE ON THE FOREIGN
POLICY SCENE. NEXT, IN ORDER TO COORDINATE
PLANNING BETWEEN THE CONGRESS AND THE
VARIOUS STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE BODIES,
I URGE CREATION OF A FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL.

REGULAR MEETINGS OF THIS COUNCIL WOULD MAKE IT EASIER TO ADAPT EXISTING LAWS TO STATE NEEDS, AS WELL AS TO DESIGN NEW PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE NEEDS.

WE NEED TO MAKE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AS PROMPTLY RESPONSIVE IN DOMESTIC CRISES AS THEY PROFESS TO BE IN CRISES ABROAD.

THE AVERAGE AMERICAN DOES NOT COMPLAIN SO MUCH ABOUT THE LEVEL OF TAXATION; HE REALIZES CITIZENS OF A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES PAY FAR HIGHER RATES THAN HE. WHAT DOES BOTHER HIM IS THAT HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE GETTING FULL VALUE FOR THAT TAX MONEY. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS MUSCLE-BOUND. IT TAKES FOREVER TO RESPOND TO THE SIMPLEST NEED.

APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL WHITE HOUSE ABMASSADORS
TO TROUBLE-SHOOT AND CUT THROUGH BUREAUCRATIC
RED-TAPE COULD HELP BEGIN THIS
REVITALIZATION OF THE FEDERAL SYSTEM. BUT
WHAT IS NEEDED MOST OF ALL IS THAT MANAGERS
OF THE VARIOUS FEDERAL PROGRAMS BECOME
LEADERS. A CITIZEN, OR A MAYOR OR EVEN
A GOVERNOR SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WRITE, CALL
AND BESEECH CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS
FOR HELP. THESE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATORS
SHOULD LOOK TO PROVIDING SERVICE. THAT'S
WHAT THE TAXPAYER IS PAYING FOR. AND HE
SHOULD GET IT!

NO DISCUSSION OF THE FEDERAL SYSTEM IS COMPLETE WITHOUT DISCUSSING MONEY. WELL, I BELIEVE THE NATION THAT CAN PRACTICALLY PAVE ITSELF OVER FOR THE AUTOMOBILE CAN PROVIDE REGULAR AND INCREASING TRUST-FUND REVENUES FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION, HOUSING, AND SO ON. AS YOU MAY KNOW, I HAVE BEEN PROPOSING A TRUST FUND FOR EDUCATION SINCE THE 1950'S, THE REVENUES TO BE DERIVED FROM LEASING OF FEDERAL OIL SHALE SITES.

AGAIN, THE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL FACTOR IN REVITALIZING THE FEDERAL SYSTEM, AS IN REVITALIZING THE ECONOMY, IS LEADERSHIP -- FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.

WE NEED TO INDUCE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO PUT THEIR OWN HOUSES IN ORDER -- PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFFECTIVE METROPOLITAN-WIDE AUTHORITIES.

WE NEED TO PROVIDE THE REVENUES NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE -- FROM TOP TO BOTTOM -- THIS WITHOUT QUESTION CALLS FOR SUBSTANTIAL REVENUE-SHARING NOW.

WE NEED TO REFORM THE POLITICAL PARTIES, FOR THERE IS AS MUCH A CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP AND CREDIBILITY IN THE POLITICAL ARENA AS THERE IS IN GOVERNMENT ITSELF.

-13-

POLITICAL PARTIES MUST BE MORE OPEN.
CONVENTIONS MUST BE MORE TRULY
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RANK AND FILE.
CAMPAIGN FINANCING MUST COME UNDER STRICT
REGULATION. BOTH PARTIES MUST WORK FOR
THE DIRECT ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT
AND VICE PRESIDENT. SUPPORT OF BOTH MAJOR
PARTIES MUST BE UNEQUIVOCAL FOR GIVING
18 YEAR-OLDS THE VOTE IN BOTH FEDERAL AND
LOCAL ELECTIONS.

OUR PROBLEMS TODAY ARE ONLY A HINT
OF WHAT LIES AHEAD UNLESS WE HAVE THE
VISION AND THE WILL NOT ONLY TO UPDATE THE
STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT, BUT TO PLAN AHEAD,
TO WORK AHEAD, AND THEN -- TO THE BEST OF
OUR ABILITY -- MAKE THE COMMITMENTS AND
MOBILIZE THE RESOURCES THAT ARE NEEDED TO
FULFILL THE COMMITMENTS.

TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE YEARS AHEAD
WE MUST SET OUR SIGHTS ON THE TARGETS OF
TOMORROW:

--TO DEVELOP THE NECESSARY POWER
RESOURCES;

--TO ESTABLISH WHERE THE NEW POPULATION
CENTERS WILL BE;

--TO DETERMINE WHERE WE WILL BUILD NEW
ROADS, AND AIRPORTS, BUS AND RAIL TERMINALS;

--TO FIND OUT HOW OUR AILING HEALTH
CARE SYSTEM SHOULD BE REPAIRED AND
AUGMENTED AND THEN DO IT;

--TO ENCOURAGE, THROUGH BETTER
KNOWLEDGE AND VOLUNTARY ACTION, A RATE OF
POPULATION GROWTH COMPATIBLE WITH OUR
RESOURCES;

--TO PROTECT OUR RESOURCES OF LAND,
WATER AND AIR, THEREBY ASSURING A
LIVEABLE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT;

--TO REDESIGN, REDEVELOP AND
REHABILITATE OUR CITIES SO THAT WE CAN
PROVIDE SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS, DECENT HOUSING,
ADEQUATE OPEN SPACES AND RECREATIONAL
FACILITIES;

--TO EXPAND, IMPROVE AND HUMANIZE
OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS.

NONE OF THESE PROBLEMS IS SUBJECT TO
SOLUTION BY GOVERNMENT ALONE -- SURELY NOT
BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALONE.

ALL OF THEM REQUIRE THE ACTIVE COOPERATION
OF FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS -- ALL
OF THEM WILL BEAR HEAVILY ON BOTH PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE RESOURCES. NONE OF THEM WILL
GO AWAY IF IGNORED.

BUT WE CAN PLAN A BETTER AMERICA.
AND WE DEFINITELY CAN BUILD A BETTER
AMERICA. TOGETHER, WE WILL.



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