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REMARKS OF

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UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

Mike Collins
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THE ELECTION OF 1972 WILL HAVE WITHIN IT THE
UNPREDICTABLE, UNKNOWN AND UNMEASURABLE ELEMENT OF
THE NEWEST OF THE NEW VOTERS -- THE 18-YEAR-OLDS,
THE 19-YEAR-OLDS AND THE 20-YEAR-OLDS.

AND THE POLITICIAN WHO ASSUMES THESE YOUNG
PEOPLE WILL VOTE AS THEIR PARENTS TELL THEM TO ARE
IN FOR A RUDE AWAKENING.

THE POLITICIAN WHO IGNORES THEM IS IN FOR
DEFEAT.

THE POLITICIAN WHO HOPES TO WIN THEIR SUPPORT MUST SPEAK TO THE FUTURE AND A VISION OF A BETTER TOMORROW.

THE ELECTION OF 1972 HAS AS MANY UNPREDICTABLES AS THE ELECTION OF 1948.

YOUNG VOTERS ARE NOT GOING TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE OLD POLITICS OF CARPING CRITICISM AND PARTISAN ATTACK.

THEY ARE GOING TO WANT IN THEIR CANDIDATES PEOPLE WHO SPEAK TO THE IDEALS OF YOUNG AMERICA -- *They are going*

to want MEN AND WOMEN WHO GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BUILDING OF THE ⁴AMERICA OF TOMORROW¹¹ WHICH WILL BE THEIRS.

THE FOUNDERS OF OUR NATION WERE NOT AFRAID OF THE YOUNG VOTER -- MANY WERE YOUNG THEMSELVES -- AND THEY WANTED YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN GOVERNMENT.

THAT'S WHY OUR CONSTITUTION PROVIDES A PERSON
CAN BE A CONGRESSMAN AT THE AGE OF 25, A SENATOR
AT 30 AND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AT 35.

I WAS ONLY 32 MYSELF WHEN I MADE MY FIRST TRY
FOR PUBLIC OFFICE. I WAS A POLITICAL SCIENCE
INSTRUCTOR AT MACALESTER COLLEGE AND THOUGHT I
KNEW A LOT ABOUT POLITICS. SO I RAN FOR MAYOR OF
MINNEAPOLIS, I LOST . . . BUT I LEARNED *much*
AND TWO YEARS LATER, I RAN AGAIN. THIS TIME I WON.

WHEN I ~~quit~~ *resigned* MY TEACHING ~~job~~ AT MACALESTER TO
BECOME MAYOR, I LOOKED AT IT MUCH THE SAME AS YOU
MIGHT VIEW THE SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM THAT BROUGHT
YOU HERE TODAY.

I DID NOT PLAN TO BE AWAY FROM THE CAMPUS VERY
LONG.

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✓ I WANTED TO HELP MY HOME CITY AND IN THE PROCESS
GET SOME PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND INSIGHT INTO
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT.

✓ I DIDN'T GET BACK TO THE CLASSROOM AS QUICKLY
AS I HAD EXPECTED. ✓ FROM BEING MAYOR OF MINNEAPOLIS
I WENT TO BEING A U. S. SENATOR AND THEN VICE
PRESIDENT.

✓ WHEN I FOUND MYSELF OUT OF PUBLIC OFFICE TWO
YEARS AGO, I DID THE NATURAL THING AND WENT BACK
TO SCHOOL. ✓ I TAUGHT AT MACALESTER ^{College} AND THE UNIVERSITY
OF MINNESOTA, ~~UNTIL LAST YEAR.~~

✓ THE CAMPUS ^{had} CHANGED ~~WENT~~ IN THOSE YEARS. AND
SO HAS POLITICS.

✓ BUT STUDENT POWER IN POLITICS IS NOTHING NEW,
ALTHOUGH IT IS MORE EXTENSIVE AND EXPLOSIVE THAN EVER
BEFORE.

WHEN I RAN FOR MAYOR OF MINNEAPOLIS, THE BACKBONE
OF MY SUPPORT CAME FROM PEOPLE OF ^{high school} COLLEGE AGE.

L THEY CALLED US HUMPHREY'S DIAPER BRIGADE.

AND WE WENT ON TO BUILD A PROGRESSIVE, LIBERAL
PARTY IN MINNESOTA.

L IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
HAVE SUDDENLY BEEN AWAKENED TO THE VERY REAL FORCE
WHICH YOUNG PEOPLE IN POLITICS CAN REPRESENT.

L THIS IRRESISTABLE URGE TO PARTICIPATE IS FIRED
BY THE REFUSAL OF THE YOUTH OF OUR COUNTRY TO ACCEPT
THE FLAWS IN OUR SOCIETY, ^{They want change,} ~~AND I THINK IT IS~~
and rightly so.
~~FUNDAMENTALLY HEALTHY.~~

L I SAY TO THE POLITICAL LEADERS OF EITHER PARTY
WHO FIND THIS DEVELOPMENT TROUBLESOME, AND WHO ARE
ALARMED BECAUSE THIS GENERATION CAN NEITHER BE
BOUGHT NOR IGNORED -- GET WITH IT, OR GET OUT OF THE
WAY.

I SAY TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE -- IF YOU ARE TO BE
TRUE TO YOUR OWN SELF, LISTEN TO YOUR CONSCIENCE,
AND THEN WADE IN AND SEEK A MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCE
IN PRACTICAL, REAL POLITICS *and Community Action*

↳ YOU CAN'T CHANGE THINGS BY STANDING ON THE
OUTSIDE YELLING ABOUT IT AND THROWING ROCKS. YOU'VE
GOT TO GET INVOLVED.

~~I THINK~~ IT'S TIME WE BROUGHT STUDENTS DIRECTLY
INTO OUR POLITICAL LIFE. NOT JUST STUFFING
ENVELOPES OR RUNNING MIMEOGRAPH MACHINES IN CAMPAIGNS,
BUT HELPING TO SHAPE POLICY.

↳ WE ALREADY HAVE A LIMITED PROGRAM OF CONGRESSIONAL
FELLOWSHIPS AND INTERNSHIPS, BUT WE'VE GOT TO DO MORE,
AND NOT JUST IN THE CONGRESS BUT ON ALL LEVELS
OF GOVERNMENT.

WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT IS A GREATLY EXPANDED
PROGRAM OF PRACTICAL POLITICAL EDUCATION AND
PARTICIPATION.

L THIS WOULD BE A PROGRAM TO PLACE COLLEGE
JUNIORS AND SENIORS IN THE OFFICES OF LOCAL
COUNCILMEN, LEGISLATORS AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. *Yes, may my*
Legislators, & executive & administrative
THEY WILL SERVE AS KEY AIDES TO THESE OFFICIALS,
PARTICIPATING IN THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL
ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING BEHIND-THE-SCENES, AND
GENERALLY SHARING THE GOOD AND THE BAD THINGS OF
PUBLIC LIFE.

L THIS IS FOR THE STUDENT WHO TAKES SERIOUSLY
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING A CITIZEN IN A FREE
SOCIETY AND WANTS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

I WANT YOU TO START AT THE PROVERBIAL GRASS
ROOTS AND WORK AND LEARN YOUR WAY UP.

LEARN HOW DAY-TO-DAY POLITICS WORKS, STARTING
IN THE PRECINCTS AND WARDS, MOVING ON UP TO CITY
HALL AND THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND THE STATEHOUSE.

└ JUST AS YOU'RE A BETTER UNITED STATES SENATOR
IF YOU'VE FIRST BEEN A CITY COUNCILMAN OR MAYOR, *Governor*
OR LEGISLATOR, SO YOU, TOO, CAN DO A BETTER JOB IF
YOU'VE HAD EXPERIENCE AT OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

└ YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW THE SYSTEM BEFORE YOU CAN
DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

└ I WANT YOU TO WORK WITH A WARD LEADER, A MAYOR,
A LEGISLATOR, A GOVERNOR.

└ I WANT YOU TO LEARN HOW THE SENATE WORKS, HOW
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WORKS, HOW THE STATE
DEPARTMENT AND THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
AND THE OTHER EXECUTIVE AGENCIES WORK.

h I WANT YOU TO LEARN STATECRAFT -- BUT I WANT YOU TO LEARN THE NITTY-GRITTY, TOO -- THE PLODDING, DAY-BY-DAY GRINDING AWAY THAT SPELLS POLITICAL ACTION AND PUBLIC POLICY.

L I WOULD HOPE THAT, AS A RESULT OF THIS TRAINING, MORE OF YOU WOULD MAKE POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT YOUR CAREER.

A SIMILAR PLAN -- BASED ON A PROPOSAL I MADE DURING MY 1968 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN -- IS BEING TRIED ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS ON A LOCAL LEVEL BY EIGHT COLLEGES. L IT STARTED LAST MONTH AND IS FOUNDATION SUPPORTED. L I PLAN TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS SOON FOR A NATIONAL PILOT PROGRAM FOR YOUTH IN POLITICS.

L WHAT I HAVE IN MIND WOULD ~~BE AN ELITIST PROGRAM~~, ATTRACTING ~~ONLY~~ ONLY THE BEST QUALIFIED, MOST DEDICATED STUDENTS.

L I'LL LEAVE THE EXACT QUALIFICATIONS TO THE
EXPERTS -- BUT I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING: IF I
WERE THE ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR, I'D PAY A LOT LESS
ATTENTION TO THE TEST SCORES THAN I PAID TO
COMMITMENT.

I'D LEAVE THE S.A.T. SCORES TO THE COMPUTERS.

L I'D BE LOOKING FOR FRESH IDEAS . . . IMAGINATION
. . . SOCIAL CONSCIENCE . . . YES, AND DREAMS --
AND THE DETERMINATION TO MAKE IMPOSSIBLE DREAMS
COME TRUE.

L ~~I THINK~~ BOTH ^{of} OUR POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD
BENEFIT FROM THIS PROGRAM. ~~I THINK~~ ^{and} THE COUNTRY
WOULD BENEFIT.

L AMERICAN POLITICS CAN'T LIVE ON PABLUM OR
GERITOL. IT NEEDS THE CONTINUING NOURISHMENT OF
IDEAS, DISSENT, DEBATE, COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION.

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L TO THE SERIOUS STUDENT, OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM
~~TODAY OBVIOUSLY~~ ^{sufficiently} IS NOT [^] BROADLY BASED ~~ENOUGH~~ ^{it is}
 NOT ATTRACTING THE BEST TALENT AND NOT RESPONSIVE
 ENOUGH TO THIS NATION'S DEEPLY FELT NEEDS.

L YOUR GENERATION HAS ARTICULATED AND BROUGHT TO
 THE FOREFRONT OF THE AMERICAN CONSCIENCE WHAT MANY
 OF US HAVE FELT FOR MANY YEARS.

But L OUR PRESENT POLITICAL STRUCTURE NEED NOT BE

DESTROYED TO BUILD A BETTER ONE. BUT IT MUST BE

REFORMED AND MODERNIZED.

- Change with order
 order " change

I regret to say that
 FOR TOO MANY PEOPLE OF BOTH YOUR GENERATION

AND MINE, POLITICS IS A DIRTY WORD.

L MAYBE THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR COUNTRY.

But LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING: POLITICS IS JUST

AS DIRTY AND JUST AS CLEAN, JUST AS GOOD AND JUST

AS BAD, JUST AS HONORABLE AND JUST AS MEAN, AS YOU --

-- AS WE -- THE PEOPLE, MAKE IT.

L IF YOU WANT TO MAKE IT BETTER, GET INTO IT.

L TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, "IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF
THE SOLUTION, YOU'RE PART OF THE PROBLEM."

L WITH PASSAGE LAST YEAR OF THE 18-YEAR-OLD VOTE
FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS, ~~AND THE CONGRESS~~ AND SEVERAL
STATE LEGISLATURES TRYING TO EXTEND THAT ^{age} TO ALL OTHER
ELECTIONS AS WELL, THE MOTIVATION AND OPPORTUNITY
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED HAS NEVER BEEN

GREATER.

— upsurge of Pol. action is on the way!

L BUT NOT EVERYONE IN GOVERNMENT WELCOMES THIS
NEW INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTH IN POLITICS.

L THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE HAS THREATENED
ALREADY HARD-PRESSED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO
STRIP THEM OF THEIR TAX EXEMPTIONS IF THEY GIVE
THEIR RECENTLY ENFRANCHISED STUDENTS A CHANCE TO
LEARN TO WORK "WITHIN THE SYSTEM."

L TO DO SO COULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF PLACING
A TAX ON THE EXERCISE OF FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTIONAL
RIGHTS.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE CONGRESS TO TAKE A
FRESH LOOK AT THE BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY
BY CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS UNDER THE INTERNAL
REVENUE CODE.

WE ARE WITNESSING A NEW PHENOMENON, THE PUBLIC
INTEREST LAW FIRMS. HISTORICALLY, THE LAWYER'S
CLIENT WAS A PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL OR A COMPANY;
BUT NOW WE HAVE A NEW, YOUNG BREED OF LAWYERS WHO
WANT TO REPRESENT NOT SOME PRIVATE INTEREST, BUT
THE GREATER PUBLIC INTEREST.

L PROBABLY THE BEST KNOWN OF THESE PUBLIC INTEREST
LAWYERS IS RALPH NADER.

*common cause
urban coalition*

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ALONG WITH THIS IS ANOTHER HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENT --

Volunteers

THE RECENT MUSHROOMING OF GRASSROOTS CITIZENS GROUPS
CONCERNED WITH CIVIL RIGHTS, CONSERVATION, CONSUMER,
POVERTY AND OTHER PROBLEMS AFFLICTING OUR SOCIETY.

THE CORPORATIONS THEY CONFRONT CAN DEDUCT THE
COSTS OF LITIGATION, ^{*calling it*} "GOVERNMENT RELATIONS" (MEANING
LOBBYING) AND PUBLIC RELATIONS (INSTITUTIONAL
ADVERTISING) AS "ORDINARY AND NECESSARY" BUSINESS
EXPENSES.

*Corporate
Social
Responsibility*

AND IF IT IS GOVERNMENT THAT THESE CITIZEN
GROUPS CHALLENGE, TAXPAYERS' MONEY IS USED TO HIRE
LAWYERS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS MEN TO FIGHT THEM.

BUT THE CITIZEN GROUPS WOULD STAND TO LOSE THEIR
TAX EXAMPTION -- AS HAS ALREADY HAPPENED IN AT LEAST
ONE CASE -- IF THEY, FOR EXAMPLE, LAUNCH AN
ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN TO POINT OUT THE ECOLOGICAL

HAZARDS OF SOME CORPORATE OR GOVERNMENTAL VENTURE.

↳ TO DENY THEM TAX EXEMPTION IS TO STRIP DAVID
OF HIS SLINGSHOT WHILE LEAVING THE CORPORATE-GOVERNMENT
GOLIATH ARMED TO THE TEETH. o

IT IS EASY ENOUGH TO SAY GOVERNMENT MUST BECOME
MORE RESPONSIVE TO ALL CITIZENS AND MORE INVITING
FOR THE YOUNG, BUT WE ^{who are} ~~ALREADY~~ IN GOVERNMENT CANNOT
DO IT ALONE.

↳ WE NEED YOUR HELP.

THAT MEANS POINTING OUT THE PROBLEMS FOR US, TELLING
US WHAT MUST BE DONE AND THEN KEEPING AFTER US UNTIL
IT GETS DONE . . . AND DONE RIGHT.

↳ AND IT MEANS TAKING A HAND IN DOING THE JOB.

IT MEANS YOU'LL HAVE TO GET INVOLVED. TODAY,
MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU.

IT NEEDS NEW IDEAS AND YOUR VIGOR, YOUR ENERGY
AND YOUR HEART. YOU HAVE IT WITHIN YOUR POWER TO
BUILD A BRAVE NEW WORLD -- IF ONLY YOU WILL WORK
AT IT.

IT'S TIME TO TUNE IN AND TURN ON -- POLITICS
CAN BE A GROOVY TRIP.

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