

OUTLINE OF REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

TWIN CITIES O.I.C.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 7, 1975

There is a great deal of talk in Washington about economic recovery. Treasury Secretary Simon and others say that we now are entering a period of recovery and prosperity. But I want to know how we can have economic recovery this year with ten million Americans out of work.

When the President and his Secretary of the Treasury speak of recovery, they must be talking about bigger profits for the corporations and the bankers. Because ordinary folks -- working families -- still are threatened by increasing unemployment.

Official unemployment is 9.2 percent. But this official figure hides the real dimensions of the problem and the suffering:

-- Black unemployment is 14.6 percent. Among white teenagers it is over 20 percent, and among black teenagers it is an incredible 40 percent. This is an economic and social catastrophe for young Americans who want to believe in this country and its economic system.

Despite the fact that unemployment is higher than it has been since the Depression, the Administration time and time again says it's all going to get better. It reminds me of what Herbert Hoover used to say -- that "prosperity is just around the corner."

The President vetoed the Emergency Employment Appropriations bill because he said things were going to get better and the government didn't need to act to alleviate suffering. But future predictions based on hopes and prayers are not the way to help Americans who desperately want to work.

Do you know that based on past experience, the number of people who will be unemployed at some time during the year or who live in a family with an unemployed person, will total over 70 million in 1975?

This means about one-third of the American people will have direct contact with the tragedy of unemployment. This is wrong. And millions of others -- the underemployed, the part-time employed -- will suffer indirectly through shorter work hours and smaller take-home pay.

In response to these statistics, Mr. Ford and Mr. Simon call for a gradual reduction in unemployment. This means accepting 6 percent unemployment until 1980.

The goal of the government should be to put people to work. Just like OIC, the government should recognize its moral and economic commitment to people so that they can be given the training and guidance to obtain gainful employment.

The great unmet needs of this nation are so substantial that employment could almost be eliminated if the government were willing to reconize them. And I don't mean leaf raking!

-- How many thousands of new jobs could we create if we seriously tried to meet our nation's housing needs?

-- How many people could we usefully put to work if we truly attempted to provide quality health care to all our citizens?

-- Who can estimate the tremendous need for trained workers to staff our nation's day care centers?

-- Who can fail to understand the need for teachers and counselors in our education system?

-- Who will deny that thousands of workers are needed to take our dilapidated rail system and turn it into a safe and efficient operation?

-- How many Americans could we put to work if we really decided to revitalize our nation's cities?

There is undeniably no shortage of important work for our citizens.

OIC and other projects have proved the fact that the vast majority of Americans want to work. Americans aren't satisfied to receive a welfare check or unemployment compensation. They want a job. They want some pride. They only ask for the opportunity to earn an honest living.

If the federal government can bail out defense contractors and banks, how can it turn its back on men and women who want to work, to feed their families?

What OIC has done here and around the nation ought to be broadened and expanded. OIC has proved that the provision of basic job skills and the right type of counsel and advice enables those who have given up hope to find a job.

But in order for OIC to work, we have to be on the road to economic recovery. Training people when there are few jobs available is not the answer.

That's why the federal government and the private sector have to plan and work together to reduce unemployment. It takes time, and it takes money. But I can think of no better way to help people, no better way to make this a better America, than to give people a chance through productive work.

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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

JUNE 7, 1975

THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF TALK IN WASHINGTON ABOUT ECONOMIC RECOVERY. TREASURY SECRETARY SIMON AND OTHERS SAY THAT WE NOW ARE ENTERING A PERIOD OF RECOVERY AND PROSPERITY. BUT I WANT TO KNOW HOW WE CAN HAVE ECONOMIC RECOVERY THIS YEAR WITH TEN MILLION AMERICANS OUT OF WORK.

WHEN THE PRESIDENT AND HIS SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY SPEAK OF RECOVERY, THEY MUST BE TALKING ABOUT BIGGER PROFITS FOR THE CORPORATIONS AND THE BANKERS. BECAUSE ORDINARY FOLKS -- WORKING FAMILIES -- STILL ARE THREATENED BY INCREASING UNEMPLOYMENT.

OFFICIAL UNEMPLOYMENT IS 8.9 PERCENT. BUT THIS OFFICIAL FIGURE HIDES THE REAL DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM AND THE SUFFERING:

-- BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT IS 14.6 PERCENT. AMONG WHITE TEENAGERS IT IS OVER 20 PERCENT, AND AMONG BLACK TEENAGERS IT IS AN INCREDIBLE 40 PERCENT. THIS IS AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CATASTROPHE FOR YOUNG AMERICANS WHO WANT TO BELIEVE IN THIS COUNTRY AND ITS ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT UNEMPLOYMENT IS HIGHER THAN IT HAS BEEN SINCE THE DEPRESSION, THE ADMINISTRATION TIME AND TIME AGAIN SAYS IT'S ALL GOING TO GET BETTER. IT REMINDS ME OF WHAT HERBERT HOOVER USED TO SAY -- THAT "PROSPERITY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER."

THE PRESIDENT VETOED THE EMERGENCY EMPLOYMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL BECAUSE HE SAID THINGS WERE GOING TO GET BETTER AND THE GOVERNMENT DIDN'T NEED TO ACT TO ALLEVIATE SUFFERING. BUT FUTURE PREDICTIONS BASED ON HOPES AND PRAYERS ARE NOT THE WAY TO HELP AMERICANS WHO DESPERATELY WANT TO WORK.

DO YOU KNOW THAT BASED ON PAST EXPERIENCE, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WILL BE UNEMPLOYED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR OR WHO LIVE IN A FAMILY WITH AN UNEMPLOYED PERSON, WILL TOTAL OVER 70 MILLION IN 1975?

THIS MEANS ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE TRAGEDY OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

THIS IS WRONG, AND MILLIONS OF OTHERS -- THE UNDEREMPLOYED, THE PART-TIME EMPLOYED -- WILL SUFFER INDIRECTLY THROUGH SHORTER WORK HOURS AND SMALLER TAKE-HOME PAY.

IN RESPONSE TO THESE STATISTICS, MR. FORD AND MR. SIMON CALL FOR A GRADUAL REDUCTION IN UNEMPLOYMENT. THIS MEANS ACCEPTING 6 PERCENT UNEMPLOYMENT UNTIL 1980.

THE GOAL OF THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE TO PUT PEOPLE TO WORK. JUST LIKE OIC, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD RECOGNIZE ITS MORAL AND ECONOMIC COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE SO THAT THEY CAN BE GIVEN THE TRAINING AND GUIDANCE TO OBTAIN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT.

THE GREAT UNMET NEEDS OF THIS NATION ARE SO SUBSTANTIAL THAT EMPLOYMENT COULD ALMOST BE ELIMINATED IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE WILLING TO RECONIZE THEM. AND I DON'T MEAN LEAF RAKING!

-- HOW MANY THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS COULD WE CREATE IF WE SERIOUSLY TRIED TO MEET OUR NATION'S HOUSING NEEDS?

-- HOW MANY PEOPLE COULD WE USEFULLY PUT TO WORK IF WE TRULY ATTEMPTED TO PROVIDE QUALITY HEALTH CARE TO ALL OUR CITIZENS?

-- WHO CAN ESTIMATE THE TREMENDOUS NEED FOR TRAINED WORKERS TO STAFF OUR NATION'S DAY CARE CENTERS?

-- WHO CAN FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS IN OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM?

-- WHO WILL DENY THAT THOUSANDS OF WORKERS ARE NEEDED TO TAKE OUR DELAPIDATED RAIL SYSTEM AND TURN IT INTO A SAFE AND EFFICIENT OPERATION?

-- HOW MANY AMERICANS COULD WE PUT TO WORK IF WE REALLY
DECIDED TO REVITALIZE OUR NATION'S CITIES?

THERE IS UNDENIABLY NO SHORTAGE OF IMPORTANT WORK FOR
OUR CITIZENS.

OIC AND OTHER PROJECTS HAVE PROVED THE FACT THAT THE VAST
MAJORITY OF AMERICANS WANT TO WORK. AMERICANS AREN'T SATISFIED
TO RECEIVE A WELFARE CHECK OR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.
THEY WANT A JOB. THEY WANT SOME PRIDE. THEY ONLY ASK FOR THE
OPPORTUNITY TO EARN AN HONEST LIVING.

IF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN BAIL OUT DEFENSE CONTRACTORS
AND BANKS, HOW CAN IT TURN ITS BACK ON MEN AND WOMEN WHO
WANT TO WORK, TO FEED THEIR FAMILIES?

WHAT OIC HAS DONE HERE AND AROUND THE NATION OUGHT TO BE BROADENED AND EXPANDED. OIC HAS PROVED THAT THE PROVISION OF BASIC JOB SKILLS AND THE RIGHT TYPE OF COUNSEL AND ADVICE ENABLES THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN UP HOPE TO FIND A JOB.

BUT IN ORDER FOR OIC TO WORK, WE HAVE TO BE ON THE ROAD TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY. TRAINING PEOPLE WHEN THERE ARE FEW JOBS AVAILABLE IS NOT THE ANSWER.

THAT'S WHY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAVE TO PLAN AND WORK TOGETHER TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT. IT TAKES TIME, AND IT TAKES MONEY. BUT I CAN THINK OF NO BETTER WAY TO HELP PEOPLE, NO BETTER WAY TO MAKE THIS A BETTER AMERICA, THAN TO GIVE PEOPLE A CHANCE THROUGH PRODUCTIVE WORK.

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