

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
IN LAUNCHING
A \$5 MILLION FUND-RAISING DRIVE FOR LEBANESE RELIEF

April 7, 1977
Washington, D. C.

It is indeed heart-warming to see this gathering of people here today. It is heart-warming because it demonstrates the significant concern in this country for the many thousands of Lebanese victimized by 18 months of hostility and destruction in their country.

I accepted the honorary chairmanship of this fund-raising drive because of my deep concern and sadness over the tragedy which has befallen the people of Lebanon. This tragedy demands our immediate attention. It demands that people from all walks of life in America reach out to help the people of Lebanon as we have done so often in the past for peoples of other lands.

The tragedy of Lebanon is a tragedy for the world. In human terms, nearly 1.4 million people are in need of help. Of these, 750,000 -- at least half of whom are children -- are destitute and desperately in need of assistance. Another 600,000 are in families whose heads are now without work. And finally, another 336,000 are chronically poor and, although indirectly affected by the war, are in need of special help.

But there is another tragedy to Lebanon. Lebanon is a democracy -- a democracy comprised of a rich and diverse variety of religions, ethnic groups and cultures. If we

cannot save this historical heritage, all humanity will lose.

The purpose of this fund-raising drive is to implement a people-to-people program for Lebanon. The uniqueness of the plan rests with the people of Lebanon themselves. A Lebanese Inter-Community Committee of nine members has been organized, each representing a principal segment of the Lebanese population, both Moslem and Christian. The creed: United we stand, divided we fall, is one which the Lebanese recognize all too well. It is because of this that all peoples of this country are approaching this tragedy with a determination of spirit that unity will prevail.

Other speakers will go into the details of the program, so I will refrain from doing so. However, at this point I would like to recognize a number of people who have been instrumental in launching this effort. First, Joe Robbie, President of the Miami Dolphins, who was instrumental in my involvement. Mr. Sam Nakassian of Bronxville, New York who formed the United States Friends of Lebanon to raise money in this country. Mr. C. Lloyd Bailey, of the U. S. Committee for UNICEF who will handle the transfer of funds to UNICEF. And UNICEF itself for the role it is now playing and will continue to play in meeting the needs of the people of Lebanon.

And finally, I want to pay tribute to Bishop Maroun, who is serving as Chairman of the Lebanese Inter-Community Committee.

In closing my remarks, I would urge all here to do all they can to make this unique plan a success. Go out to your communities and help us to raise the funds which will be necessary to extend a helping hand to the people of Lebanon. Thank you all so very much for taking the time to meet here today. I am deeply grateful for your interest and sense of humanity.



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