

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SYMPOSIUM

Washington, D. C.

June 14, 1977

I am honored to be here today to participate in the Smithsonian's sixth international symposium on "Kin and Communities: The Peopling of America." And I am especially honored to be the recipient of the Institution's Joseph Henry Medal. Thank you very much.

The Smithsonian holds a very special place in my heart. I am sure that James Smithson, the Englishman who endowed the Institution so generously -- even though he never visited the United States -- would be particularly pleased with the vital issues that will be addressed at this symposium. I feel certain that he would strongly approve of the direction the Smithsonian has taken and its truly outstanding accomplishments.

Today is the Queen of England's official birthday, so I would like to take this opportunity of saluting Queen Elizabeth and adding my congratulations in this year of her Jubilee celebration. She has been an outstanding example of dedication to her family and her country in her 25 years on the throne.

The Smithsonian is a learning center, where youngsters can get their first glimpse at a DC-3 and scholars can continue to explore the mysteries that have puzzled the mind of man for hundreds of years.

I'm proud of this Institution, and I'm proud of you, Dillion, and your colleagues who have distinguished yourselves in carrying out its work.

I'm particularly pleased that you have chosen to discuss the Peopling of America at this symposium. There is no topic that is more important to our country and to those who inhabit it.

But where do you begin when you take on such a discussion? You begin where God began when he created the first man and the first woman. You begin with the family.

I have asked myself why are we seeing the disintegration of the family?

If I go back only as far as my own childhood, I can see examples of what I thought was good, and perhaps is not so prevalent nowadays. I am talking about the interaction among family members, the shared concern.

When I was growing up in South Dakota, in a small town, parents and children knew each other well. It was natural for children to learn the lessons of life in their most useful form -- by observation and participation.

In our cities, today, it often takes a special effort to get the whole family together. Parents at work and in their social lives often are strangers to their children, and the children are strangers to them.

I was at my father's elbow constantly, watching him, listening to him; eventually, of course, debating with him. It was the finest legacy he could have left me.

With my own family, I have tried to fashion my relationship with my children similar to that which I have enjoyed with my father. I had my political career and was away much of the time. But when I was home, family time at the breakfast table was the most important part of my day and Sundays were generally reserved for family.

Muriel and I had sort of a family contract, unwritten, almost unspoken, but understood. I was a public man, restless, busy, traveling, speaking, working long hours away from home. Muriel, in a very real and almost total sense, held the family together -- giving doubly of herself to the children.

She took on extra burdens -- to give me more time to attend to the tasks I had outside the family. This sacrifice, on her part, has rendered so much joy and pride in return.

Over the years, I have had the great happiness of seeing in my own children this sense of purpose, responsibility and concern for the welfare of those we love.

In 1960, on election night, we were celebrating not only my re-election to the United States Senate, but also the birth of our first grandchild. She was named Victoria, to celebrate in the child's name our political victory.

The next day we learned that Vicky was retarded, a victim of Down's Syndrome.

My daughter Nancy, her husband, Muriel and I all wept at this news, shocked by Vicky's condition, frightened by our lack of knowledge about retardation, unsure what the future held in store for little Victoria. The decision was made to rear Vicky at home, in a family atmosphere, and it is a decision we have never regretted.

We could not tell then what a source of joy and love she would be, how her handicap would lead us, and more particularly Muriel, into some of the most satisfying and productive work of our lives, working with the families, teachers and medical specialists for whom retardation is a special concern.

The family is the basic moral and economic element of society. It is vital to human development. It is imperative, therefore, that those of us who recognize its importance accept the responsibility for taking whatever steps are necessary to preserve the family's moral foundation.

And we have no time to spare. The breakdown of the family unit is occurring at an unprecedented rate throughout this country. In fact, according to the most recent data compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics, the divorce rate of our population has doubled in the last decade!

And the extended family in this country is all but extinct. According to a major study, in 1900 fifty percent of the households in Boston included parents, children and at least one other relative. Today the comparable figure is four percent. We cannot afford, as a nation, to let this continue.

There are many reasons for the breakdown of the family unit -- a loosening of morals, a changing and highly mobile society, religious indifference and even television, to name a few.

Long ago we should have asked: What has been the effect of urbanization on our homes and families and neighborhoods? And, what has been the impact of the increasing necessity for wives, as well as their husbands, to enter the labor force, with the result that almost one-half of the women in our nation are working today?

So today I want to talk to you about these things. And I especially want to talk to you about morality in America's families and communities.

It is unfortunate that so many people think when you talk about morality that you are talking just about sexual behavior or misbehavior -- promiscuity, adultery and the like. This is a serious misunderstanding, because morality concerns every kind of human behavior -- towards ourselves, toward our fellow human beings, other living creatures, and even the earth itself.

Man is unique among all living creatures. Man alone is aware of himself as a separate being, with the ability to choose how he will act and the ability to assess the consequences of his actions upon himself, his family and his community.

This special quality of man, the knowledge of good and evil, is a great miracle and a great mystery. It also is a terrible burden.

No one ever has fully understood why it is that man knows that some actions are good and others are evil. Philosophers have been trying to understand and explain this for thousands of years. Personally, I think the Old Testament gives the best account.

In the simply and beautifully told story of Adam and Eve in the book of Genesis, we have an account of the crucial mement at the outset of the history of mankind -- the moment at which man became human, when he acquired his soul and his freedom.

Whether you accept the biblical account literally, or as a parable that expresses the deepest and most mysterious truths about the human condition, the fact is that at some point man, and only man, did acquire the knowledge of good and evil.

We may not understand how we know that some things are good and other evil, or why we know it, but we do know it. And it is on this knowledge that what we call morality and ethics are based.

Because he is aware of his actions and of their consequences, because he possesses the knowledge of good and evil, man feels responsible. And this feeling of responsibility for our actions is the key to understanding all ethical and moral standards.

It transcends race, religion, culture and history. It is what makes human society possible. It is the foundation of the family.

No matter how different human institutions may appear on the surface, no matter how infinite the variety of geographical, historical and cultural peculiarities they represent, they all have one thing in common: they are the means by which one generation passes on to the next the rules of social and individual cooperation which are necessary for survival.

Everyone knows that man is a social animal; it has been said so often that it has become a cliché. But far too few of us ever really stop to think what that means.

What it comes down to is this: If we deny the existence of moral standards, if we deny responsibility for ourselves, for the people we love, and for our fellow human beings in general, we cannot survive as individuals or as a society.

If we do not live by standards of truth and justice and kindness and respect for the integrity and rights of others, we will perish; we will lose our humanity. It's that simple.

If you don't subscribe to this, you might consider the frightening example of the Ik, a tribe of nomadic hunters and gatherers who live in northern Uganda, along the borders of Kenya and the Sudan.

A few years ago, the valley where the Ik did most of its hunting was set aside by the government as a national park and wild-life sanctuary. The Ik were forced off their land and ordered to become farmers.



Unfortunately, the mountains where they live have virtually no fertile soil, and very little water. For the tribe, it was a death sentence.

None of their institutions -- religion, family, work -- were organized for settled life as farmers, and so they were useless in the struggle to adapt to a new way of life. They were abandoned one by one, and life for the tribe became simply the battle of each individual to obtain enough food for himself to keep alive from one day to the next.

The family in the society of the tribe has disintegrated. Children are abandoned by their parents at the age of three. Anyone who cannot obtain food for himself -- the sick, the elderly, the weak, the timid -- is left to die of starvation.

What food there is is not shared with husband, wife, parents, children or anyone else, because it would mean death for the one who shares. Honesty, truth, loyalty and love -- in short, all the values we associate with being human -- simply do not exist anymore among this tribe.

Colin Turnbull, the anthropologist who tells the story of the Ik in his book, *THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE*, believes that their experience should be a warning to all of us. Our families, too, are breaking down under the strain of too rapid technological and social "progress." The parallel with our own family structure is lethal.

And we must learn from our past, in order to analyze our present, and predict our future. As George Santayana reminds us:

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

I long have felt that the major problem in our country is social disintegration.

By this I mean the breakdown of the family, which is so vital to human development, and the personal irresponsibility, the lack of commitment to community and country, the callous selfishness and self-indulgence, the seeming lack of moral sense, that lies behind so much of our vandalism, petty crime, drug and alcohol excess, business and tax and welfare cheating, divorce and child neglect.

In the absence of strong moral standards, wealth and luxury have become the measure of personal success. We have used our wealth to buy off our personal responsibilities to ourselves, our families and our country.

But I am more optimistic than Mr. Turnbull; I think we still do have a choice. We do not have to give up our humanity as the Ik did. Nevertheless, Mr. Turnbull's warning is worth repeating. He says:

"...We have tinkered with society, patching it up to cope with two thousand years of change, but it shows signs of collapse almost everywhere... Family, economy, government and religion, the basic categories of social activity and behavior, despite our tinkering, are no longer structured in a way that makes them compatible with each other or with us, for they are no longer structured in such a way as to create any sense of social unity involving a shared and mutual responsibility between all members of our society."

"The sorry state of society in the civilized world today," he states, "is in large measure due to the simple fact that social change has not kept up with technological change," which is "carrying us with it in an unknown direction, leaving our old form of society behind but," as he believes the signs seem to indicate, "holding in store for us the future already tasted by the Ik..."

Turnbull concludes that the same kinds of societal breakdown suffered by the Iq are beginning to produce the same results among ourselves. But I disagree.

I think we do have the capacity to choose. We can, if we will, create new institutions, build new bonds of trust and affection and cooperation in families throughout our society.

It will not be easy, because it will require a massive new affirmation of personal and individual responsibility, for our own behavior, and for the welfare of others -- our family, our community, our country.

Most of our problems today are symptoms of an almost universal flight from responsibility. In personal life we see the abuse of drugs and alcohol, mental illness, apathy, the lack of personal goals, and an unhealthy fascination with speed, luxury and violence.

In family life we have spiraling rates of divorce and juvenile delinquency, the exile of our elderly to retirement communities, and the substitution of promiscuity and pornography for truly loving and caring relationships between the sexes.

In the community and society as a whole we find general disrespect for the law and the exploitation of political, economic and governmental power for selfish and corrupt purposes.

It is not a question of abolishing our institutions and starting over.

What we must do, instead, is come to a new understanding of ourselves as moral, responsible human beings.

We possess the miraculous gift of knowledge of good and evil, and the ability to choose between them. We cannot escape the consequences of our behavior. We must accept responsibility for our own actions, for the welfare of those we love, and for the future of our society.

Perhaps the fate of man is best described in the new novel by Reynolds Price, *THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH*, which chronicles a family of four generations spanning the years 1903 to 1944, by the character who says: "We are very plain people, we are the history of the world."

We do not have all the answers on rebuilding a sense of responsibility within our families and our communities. How do we regain or restore a sense of community? How do we reestablish the close personal relationships that have characterized the family? These should be the two central questions of this Conference. And it is precisely the purpose of this conference to begin the search for these answers. But we do share a deep concern about restoring this foundation of our society.

Let us, therefore, dedicate ourselves to establishing this issue as being of the highest national priority.

Let it be said of this conference that this is where the movement began in America's third century to build a better life for future generations of American families.

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REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION SYMPOSIUM

WASHINGTON, D. C.

JUNE 14, 1977

- Margaret Mead  
-1- ~~Ellen Riepley~~

I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
SMITHSONIAN'S SIXTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON "KIN AND  
COMMUNITIES: THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA." AND I AM ESPECIALLY  
HONORED TO BE THE RECIPIENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S JOSEPH HENRY  
MEDAL. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THE SMITHSONIAN HOLDS A VERY SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART.  
I AM SURE THAT JAMES SMITHSON, THE ENGLISHMAN WHO ENDOWED THE  
INSTITUTION SO GENEROUSLY -- EVEN THOUGH HE NEVER VISITED THE  
UNITED STATES -- WOULD BE PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE VITAL  
ISSUES THAT WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THIS SYMPOSIUM. I FEEL CERTAIN  
THAT HE WOULD STRONGLY APPROVE OF THE DIRECTION THE SMITHSONIAN  
HAS TAKEN AND <sup>with</sup> ITS TRULY OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

h TODAY IS THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND'S OFFICIAL BIRTHDAY, SO I  
WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY OF SALUTING QUEEN ELIZABETH  
AND ADDING MY CONGRATULATIONS IN THIS YEAR OF HER JUBILEE  
CELEBRATION. h SHE HAS BEEN AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF DEDICATION  
TO HER FAMILY AND HER COUNTRY IN HER 25 YEARS ON THE THRONE.

h THE SMITHSONIAN IS A LEARNING CENTER, WHERE YOUNGSTERS  
CAN GET THEIR FIRST GLIMPSE AT A DC-3 AND SCHOLARS CAN CONTINUE  
TO EXPLORE THE MYSTERIES THAT HAVE PUZZLED THE MIND OF MAN FOR  
HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

h I'M PROUD OF THIS INSTITUTION, AND I'M PROUD OF YOU,  
DILLON, AND YOUR COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED YOURSELVES IN  
CARRYING OUT ITS WORK.



L I'M PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DISCUSS THE  
PEOPLING OF AMERICA AT THIS SYMPOSIUM L THERE IS NO TOPIC THAT  
IS MORE IMPORTANT TO OUR COUNTRY AND TO THOSE WHO INHABIT IT.

L BUT WHERE DO YOU BEGIN WHEN YOU TAKE ON SUCH A DISCUSSION?

L YOU BEGIN WHERE GOD BEGAN WHEN HE CREATED THE FIRST MAN AND THE  
FIRST WOMAN. YOU BEGIN WITH THE FAMILY.

L I HAVE ASKED MYSELF, WHY ARE WE SEEING THE DISINTEGRATION  
OF THE FAMILY?

L IF I GO BACK ONLY AS FAR AS MY OWN CHILDHOOD, I CAN SEE  
EXAMPLES OF WHAT I THOUGHT WAS GOOD, AND PERHAPS IS NOT SO

PREVALENT NOWADAYS L I AM TALKING ABOUT THE INTERACTION AMONG  
FAMILY MEMBERS, THE SHARED CONCERN.

4 WHEN I WAS GROWING UP IN SOUTH DAKOTA, IN A SMALL TOWN, PARENTS  
AND CHILDREN KNEW EACH OTHER WELL. 4 IT WAS NATURAL FOR CHILDREN  
TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF LIFE IN THEIR MOST USEFUL FORM -- BY  
OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPATION.

4 IN OUR CITIES, TODAY, IT OFTEN TAKES A SPECIAL EFFORT TO GET  
THE WHOLE FAMILY TOGETHER. 4 PARENTS AT WORK AND IN THEIR SOCIAL  
LIVES OFTEN ARE STRANGERS TO THEIR CHILDREN, AND THE CHILDREN ARE  
STRANGERS TO THEM.

4 I WAS AT MY FATHER'S ELBOW CONSTANTLY, WATCHING HIM, LISTENING  
TO HIM; EVENTUALLY, OF COURSE, DEBATING WITH HIM. 4 IT WAS THE  
FINEST LEGACY HE COULD HAVE LEFT ME.

4 WITH MY OWN FAMILY, I HAVE TRIED TO FASHION MY RELATIONSHIP  
WITH MY CHILDREN SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH I ~~HAVE~~ ENJOYED WITH MY  
FATHER.

I HAD MY POLITICAL CAREER AND WAS AWAY MUCH OF THE TIME, BUT WHEN

I WAS HOME, FAMILY TIME AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE WAS THE MOST  
IMPORTANT PART OF MY DAY AND SUNDAYS WERE GENERALLY RESERVED  
FOR FAMILY.

MURIEL AND I HAD SORT OF A FAMILY CONTRACT, UNWRITTEN,  
ALMOST UNSPOKEN, BUT UNDERSTOOD. I WAS A PUBLIC MAN, ~~REVEREND~~,  
BUSY, TRAVELING, SPEAKING, WORKING LONG HOURS AWAY FROM HOME.

MURIEL, IN A VERY REAL AND ALMOST TOTAL SENSE, HELD THE FAMILY  
TOGETHER -- GIVING DOUBLY OF HERSELF TO THE CHILDREN.

SHE TOOK ON EXTRA BURDENS -- TO GIVE ME MORE TIME TO ATTEND  
TO THE TASKS I HAD OUTSIDE THE FAMILY. THIS SACRIFICE, ON HER  
PART, HAS RENDERED SO MUCH JOY AND PRIDE IN RETURN.

Over the years, I have had the great happiness of seeing  
in my own children this sense of purpose, responsibility and  
concern for the welfare of those we love.

In 1960, on election night, we were celebrating not only  
my re-election to the United States Senate, but also the birth  
of our first grandchild. She was named Victoria, to celebrate  
in the child's name our political victory.

The next day we learned that Vicky was retarded, a victim  
of Down's Syndrome.

My daughter Nancy, her husband, Muriel and I all wept at this  
news, shocked by Vicky's condition, frightened by our lack of  
knowledge about retardation, unsure what the future held  
in store for little Victoria.

L THE DECISION WAS MADE TO REAR VICKY AT HOME, IN A FAMILY  
ATMOSPHERE, AND IT IS A DECISION WE HAVE NEVER REGRETTED.

L WE COULD NOT TELL THEN WHAT A SOURCE OF JOY AND LOVE SHE WOULD  
BE, HOW HER HANDICAP WOULD LEAD US, AND MORE PARTICULARLY  
MURIEL, INTO SOME OF THE MOST SATISFYING AND PRODUCTIVE WORK  
OF OUR LIVES, WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES, TEACHERS AND MEDICAL  
SPECIALISTS FOR WHOM RETARDATION IS A SPECIAL CONCERN.

~~THE~~ <sup>educational and</sup> THE FAMILY IS THE BASIC MORAL AND ECONOMIC ELEMENT OF SOCIETY.

L IT IS VITAL TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. L IT IS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE,

THAT THOSE OF US WHO RECOGNIZE ITS IMPORTANCE ACCEPT THE  
RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING WHATEVER STEPS ARE NECESSARY TO  
PRESERVE THE FAMILY'S MORAL FOUNDATION.



L AND WE HAVE NO TIME TO SPARE. L THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY

UNIT IS OCCURRING AT AN UNPRECEDENTED RATE THROUGHOUT THIS

COUNTRY. L IN FACT, ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT DATA COMPILED

BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, THE DIVORCE

RATE OF OUR POPULATION HAS DOUBLED IN THE LAST DECADE!

L AND THE EXTENDED FAMILY IN THIS COUNTRY IS ALL BUT EXTINCT,

L ACCORDING TO A MAJOR STUDY, IN 1900 FIFTY PERCENT OF THE HOUSE-

HOLDS IN BOSTON INCLUDED PARENTS, CHILDREN AND AT LEAST ONE

OTHER RELATIVE. L TODAY THE COMPARABLE FIGURE IS FOUR PERCENT.

L ~~WE CANNOT AFFORD, AS A NATION, TO LET THIS CONTINUE.~~

L THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY

UNIT -- A LOOSENING OF MORALS, A CHANGING AND HIGHLY MOBILE

SOCIETY, RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AND EVEN TELEVISION, TO NAME A FEW.

~~The father + mother both with jobs outside the home~~

LONG AGO WE SHOULD HAVE ASKED: WHAT HAS BEEN THE EFFECT  
OF URBANIZATION ON OUR HOMES AND FAMILIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS?  
AND, WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE INCREASING NECESSITY FOR  
WIVES, AS WELL AS THEIR HUSBANDS, TO ENTER THE LABOR FORCE, WITH  
THE RESULT THAT ALMOST ONE-HALF OF THE WOMEN IN OUR NATION ARE  
WORKING TODAY?

SO TODAY I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THESE THINGS, AND I  
ESPECIALLY WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT MORALITY IN AMERICA'S  
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT SO MANY PEOPLE THINK WHEN YOU TALK  
ABOUT MORALITY THAT YOU ARE TALKING JUST ABOUT SEXUAL BEHAVIOR  
OR MISBEHAVIOR -- PROMISCUITY, ADULTERY AND THE LIKE.

THIS IS A SERIOUS MISUNDERSTANDING, BECAUSE MORALITY CONCERNS

EVERY KIND OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR -- TOWARDS OURSELVES, TOWARD OUR

FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS, OTHER LIVING CREATURES, AND EVEN THE EARTH

ITSELF.

MAN IS UNIQUE AMONG ALL LIVING CREATURES. MAN ALONE IS

AWARE OF HIMSELF AS A SEPARATE BEING, WITH THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE

HOW HE WILL ACT AND THE ABILITY TO ASSESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS

ACTIONS UPON HIMSELF, HIS FAMILY AND HIS COMMUNITY.

THIS SPECIAL QUALITY OF MAN, THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, IS

A GREAT MIRACLE AND A GREAT MYSTERY. IT ALSO IS A TERRIBLE BURDEN.

NO ONE EVER HAS FULLY UNDERSTOOD WHY IT IS THAT MAN KNOWS  
THAT SOME ACTIONS ARE GOOD AND OTHERS ARE EVIL.

PHILOSOPHERS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN THIS  
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. ( PERSONALLY, I THINK THE OLD TESTAMENT  
GIVES THE BEST ACCOUNT.

IN THE SIMPLY AND BEAUTIFULLY TOLD STORY OF ADAM AND EVE  
IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS WE HAVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE CRUCIAL  
MOMENT AT THE OUTSET OF THE HISTORY OF MANKIND -- THE MOMENT AT  
WHICH MAN BECAME HUMAN, WHEN HE ACQUIRED HIS SOUL AND HIS FREEDOM.

WHETHER YOU ACCEPT THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT LITERALLY, OR AS A  
PARABLE THAT EXPRESSES THE DEEPEST AND MOST MYSTERIOUS TRUTHS  
ABOUT THE HUMAN CONDITION, THE FACT IS THAT AT SOME POINT MAN,  
AND ONLY MAN, DID ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL.

WE MAY NOT UNDERSTAND HOW WE KNOW THAT SOME THINGS ARE  
GOOD AND OTHER EVIL, OR WHY WE KNOW IT, BUT WE DO KNOW IT.

AND IT IS ON THIS KNOWLEDGE THAT WHAT WE CALL MORALITY AND

ETHICS ARE BASED,

BECAUSE HE IS AWARE OF HIS ACTIONS AND OF THEIR CONSEQUENCES,

BECAUSE HE POSSESSES THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, MAN FEELS

RESPONSIBLE. AND THIS FEELING OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR ACTIONS

IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING ALL ETHICAL AND MORAL STANDARDS,

IT TRANSCENDS RACE, RELIGION, CULTURE AND HISTORY. IT

IS WHAT MAKES HUMAN SOCIETY POSSIBLE. IT IS THE FOUNDATION

OF THE FAMILY.

NO MATTER HOW DIFFERENT HUMAN INSTITUTIONS MAY APPEAR

ON THE SURFACE, NO MATTER HOW INFINITE THE VARIETY OF GEOGRAPHICAL,

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PECULIARITIES THEY REPRESENT, THEY ALL

HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON:



THEY ARE THE MEANS BY WHICH ONE GENERATION PASSES ON TO THE

behavior  
NEXT THE RULES OF SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL COOPERATION WHICH ARE  
NECESSARY FOR SURVIVAL.

⦚  
⦚  
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT MAN IS A SOCIAL ANIMAL; IT HAS BEEN SAID  
SO OFTEN THAT IT HAS BECOME A CLICHE. ⦚ BUT FAR TOO FEW OF US EVER  
REALLY STOP TO THINK WHAT THAT MEANS.

⦚  
WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO IS THIS: IF WE DENY THE EXISTENCE OF  
MORAL STANDARDS, IF WE DENY RESPONSIBILITY FOR OURSELVES, FOR THE  
PEOPLE WE LOVE, AND FOR OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS IN GENERAL, WE  
CANNOT SURVIVE AS INDIVIDUALS OR AS A SOCIETY.

⦚  
IF WE DO NOT LIVE BY STANDARDS OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE AND  
KINDNESS AND RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY AND RIGHTS OF OTHERS, WE  
WILL PERISH; WE WILL LOSE OUR HUMANITY. ⦚ IT'S THAT SIMPLE!

L IF YOU DON'T SUBSCRIBE TO THIS, YOU MIGHT CONSIDER THE FRIGHT-  
ENING EXAMPLE OF THE IK, A TRIBE OF NOMADIC HUNTERS AND GATHERERS  
(pronounced Eek)  
WHO LIVE IN NORTHERN UGANDA, ALONG THE BORDERS OF KENYA AND THE SUDAN.

L A FEW YEARS AGO, THE VALLEY WHERE THE IK DID MOST OF ITS  
HUNTING WAS SET ASIDE BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A NATIONAL PARK AND

WILDLIFE SANCTUARY. L THE IK WERE FORCED OFF THEIR LAND AND  
ORDERED TO BECOME FARMERS.

L UNFORTUNATELY, THE MOUNTAINS WHERE THEY LIVE HAVE VIRTUALLY NO  
FERTILE SOIL, AND VERY LITTLE WATER. L FOR THE TRIBE, IT WAS A DEATH  
SENTENCE.

L NONE OF THEIR INSTITUTIONS -- RELIGION, FAMILY, WORK -- WERE  
ORGANIZED FOR SETTLED LIFE AS FARMERS, AND SO THEY WERE USELESS IN  
THE STRUGGLE TO ADAPT TO A NEW WAY OF LIFE.

↳ THEY WERE ABANDONED ONE BY ONE, AND LIFE FOR THE TRIBE BECAME

SIMPLY THE BATTLE OF EACH INDIVIDUAL TO OBTAIN ENOUGH FOOD FOR

himself  
↳ HIMSELF, TO KEEP ALIVE FROM ONE DAY TO THE NEXT.

↳ THE FAMILY IN THE SOCIETY OF THE TRIBE HAS DISINTEGRATED.

↳ CHILDREN ARE ABANDONED BY THEIR PARENTS, ~~AT THE AGE OF THREE~~ ANYONE

WHO CANNOT OBTAIN FOOD FOR HIMSELF -- THE SICK, THE ELDERLY, THE

WEAK, THE TIMID -- IS LEFT TO DIE OF STARVATION.

↳ WHAT FOOD THERE IS IS NOT SHARED WITH HUSBAND, WIFE, PARENTS,  
CHILDREN OR ANYONE ELSE, BECAUSE IT WOULD MEAN DEATH FOR THE ONE

WHO SHARES. ↳ HONESTY, TRUTH, LOYALTY AND LOVE -- IN SHORT, ALL THE

VALUES WE ASSOCIATE WITH BEING HUMAN -- SIMPLY DO NOT EXIST ANYMORE

AMONG THIS TRIBE.

L COLIN TURNBULL, THE ANTHROPOLOGIST WHO TELLS THE STORY OF THE  
IK IN HIS BOOK, THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE, BELIEVES THAT THEIR EXPERIENCE  
SHOULD BE A WARNING TO ALL OF US. L OUR FAMILIES, TOO, ARE BREAKING  
DOWN UNDER THE STRAIN OF TOO RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL  
"PROGRESS." THE PARALLEL WITH OUR OWN FAMILY STRUCTURE IS LETHAL.

L AND WE MUST LEARN FROM OUR PAST, IN ORDER TO ANALYZE OUR  
PRESENT AND PREDICT OUR FUTURE. L AS GEORGE SANTAYANA REMINDS US:

"THOSE WHO CANNOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT."

L I LONG HAVE FELT THAT THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN OUR COUNTRY IS  
SOCIAL DISINTEGRATION.

L BY THIS I MEAN THE BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY, WHICH IS SO  
VITAL TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, AND THE PERSONAL IRRESPONSIBILITY, THE  
LACK OF COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY,

THE CALLOUS SELFISHNESS AND SELF-INDULGENCE, THE SEEMING LACK  
OF MORAL SENSE, THAT LIES BEHIND SO MUCH OF OUR VANDALISM, PETTY  
CRIME, DRUG AND ALCOHOL EXCESS, BUSINESS AND TAX AND WELFARE  
CHEATING, DIVORCE AND CHILD NEGLECT.

IN THE ABSENCE OF STRONG MORAL STANDARDS, WEALTH AND LUXURY  
HAVE BECOME THE MEASURE OF PERSONAL SUCCESS. WE HAVE USED OUR  
WEALTH TO BUY OFF OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES TO OURSELVES, OUR  
FAMILIES AND OUR COUNTRY.

BUT I AM MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN MR. TURNBULL; I THINK WE  
STILL DO HAVE A CHOICE. WE DO NOT HAVE TO GIVE UP OUR HUMANITY AS  
THE IK DID. NEVERTHELESS, MR. TURNBULL'S WARNING IS WORTH  
REPEATING. HE SAYS:



"...WE HAVE TINKERED WITH SOCIETY, PATCHING IT UP TO COPE  
WITH TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF CHANGE, BUT IT SHOWS SIGNS OF  
COLLAPSE ALMOST EVERYWHERE... FAMILY, ECONOMY, GOVERNMENT  
AND RELIGION, THE BASIC CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL ACTIVITY AND  
BEHAVIOR, DESPITE OUR TINKERING, ARE NO LONGER STRUCTURED  
IN A WAY THAT MAKES THEM COMPATIBLE WITH EACH OTHER OR WITH  
US, FOR THEY ARE NO LONGER STRUCTURED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO  
CREATE ANY SENSE OF SOCIAL UNITY INVOLVING A SHARED AND  
MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN ALL MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY,"  
"THE SORRY STATE OF SOCIETY IN THE CIVILIZED WORLD TODAY,"  
HE STATES, "IS IN LARGE MEASURE DUE TO THE SIMPLE FACT THAT  
SOCIAL CHANGE HAS NOT KEPT UP WITH TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE,"

WHICH IS "CARRYING US WITH IT IN AN UNKNOWN DIRECTION,

LEAVING OUR OLD FORM OF SOCIETY BEHIND BUT," AS HE BELIEVES

THE SIGNS SEEM TO INDICATE, "HOLDING IN STORE FOR US THE

FUTURE ALREADY TASTED BY THE IK..."

TURNBULL CONCLUDES THAT THE SAME KINDS OF SOCIETAL BREAK-  
DOWN SUFFERED BY THE IK ARE BEGINNING TO PRODUCE THE SAME RESULTS  
AMONG OURSELVES. BUT I DISAGREE.

I THINK WE DO HAVE THE CAPACITY TO CHOOSE. WE CAN, IF WE  
WILL, CREATE NEW INSTITUTIONS, BUILD NEW BONDS OF TRUST AND  
AFFECTION AND COOPERATION IN FAMILIES THROUGHOUT OUR SOCIETY.

IT WILL NOT BE EASY, BECAUSE IT WILL REQUIRE A MASSIVE NEW  
AFFIRMATION OF PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY, FOR OUR  
OWN BEHAVIOR, AND FOR THE WELFARE OF OTHERS -- OUR FAMILY, OUR  
COMMUNITY, OUR COUNTRY.

MOST OF OUR PROBLEMS TODAY ARE SYMPTOMS OF AN ALMOST UNIVERSAL FLIGHT FROM RESPONSIBILITY. IN PERSONAL LIFE WE SEE THE ABUSE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, MENTAL ILLNESS, APATHY, THE LACK OF PERSONAL GOALS, AND AN UNHEALTHY FASCINATION WITH SPEED, LUXURY AND VIOLENCE.

IN FAMILY LIFE WE HAVE SPIRALING RATES OF DIVORCE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, THE EXILE OF OUR ELDERLY TO RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES, AND THE SUBSTITUTION OF PROMISCUITY AND PORNOGRAPHY FOR TRULY LOVING AND CARING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SEXES.

IN THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY AS A WHOLE WE FIND *all too much* DISRESPECT FOR THE LAW AND THE EXPLOITATION OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND GOVERNMENTAL POWER FOR SELFISH AND CORRUPT PURPOSES.

*But,* IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF ABOLISHING OUR INSTITUTIONS AND               STARTING OVER.

WHAT WE MUST DO, INSTEAD, IS COME TO A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF  
OURSELVES AS MORAL, RESPONSIBLE HUMAN BEINGS.

↳ WE POSSESS THE MIRACULOUS GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL,  
AND THE ABILITY TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THEM. ↳ WE CANNOT ESCAPE THE  
CONSEQUENCES OF OUR BEHAVIOR. ↳ WE MUST ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR  
OWN ACTIONS, FOR THE WELFARE OF THOSE WE LOVE, AND FOR THE FUTURE  
OF OUR SOCIETY.

PERHAPS THE FATE OF MAN IS BEST DESCRIBED IN THE NEW NOVEL  
BY REYNOLDS PRICE, THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH, WHICH CHRONICLES  
A FAMILY OF FOUR GENERATIONS SPANNING THE YEARS 1903 TO 1944, BY  
THE CHARACTER WHO SAYS: "WE ARE VERY PLAIN PEOPLE, WE ARE THE  
HISTORY OF THE WORLD."

WE DO NOT HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS ON REBUILDING A SENSE OF  
RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN OUR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITIES. / How  
DO WE REGAIN OR RESTORE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY? / How DO WE  
REESTABLISH THE CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT HAVE  
CHARACTERIZED THE FAMILY? THESE SHOULD BE THE TWO CENTRAL  
QUESTIONS OF THIS CONFERENCE. AND IT IS PRECISELY THE PURPOSE  
OF THIS CONFERENCE TO BEGIN THE SEARCH FOR THESE ANSWERS. BUT  
WE DO SHARE A DEEP CONCERN ABOUT RESTORING THIS FOUNDATION OF  
OUR SOCIETY.

LET US, THEREFORE, DEDICATE OURSELVES TO ESTABLISHING THIS  
ISSUE AS BEING OF THE HIGHEST NATIONAL PRIORITY.

LET IT BE SAID OF THIS CONFERENCE THAT THIS IS WHERE THE MOVE-  
MENT BEGAN IN AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY TO BUILD A BETTER LIFE FOR  
FUTURE GENERATIONS OF AMERICAN FAMILIES.

# # # # #



(Draft)

KIN AND COMMUNITIES:  
THE PEOPLING OF AMERICA

Sixth international symposium  
of the Smithsonian Institution

OPENING CEREMONY

Eisenhower Theater  
John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
Washington City

Tuesday, June 14, 1977, at 10:30 a.m.

propose, Dieu dispose". In Washington it is transposed as, "L'Homme propose, Le Senate dispose." We have a dear friend with us today who has found to his cost that the Senate requires him to get a foreign aid bill through in the next few hours, and we had used this occasion to recognize our dear friend by presenting him with the Smithsonian award called the Henry Medal. So, without further ado, I would like to read the citation for Hubert Horatio Humphrey:

"A man of bubbling imagination and vision, coupled with practicality, your devotion to the Smithsonian reflects your caring for the cultural and scientific heritage of this nation and the civilizations which still nourish us. The Regents of the Smithsonian gain honor for all in presenting to you the Henry Medal, not only for your vital service to the Board of Regents, your Chairmanship of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in its infancy, your enduring support of our aims, but also for your exemplary career in improving the quality of life for all peoples."

"You pay homage to your ancestors in Norway, Wales, and France by what you are contributing to the American experience." So, if I may, I would like to give Senator Humphrey our Henry Medal at this time.

(Applause.)

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr. Ripley, my friend Dillon Ripley, and the

distinguished, much respected and admired Margaret Mead, and those who are in attendance at this symposium, I am embarrassed, and I am also apologetic. Yesterday I was informed that the Senate would take up what we call the International Financial Institutions Act, which is legislation of paramount importance dealing with the World Bank, the Interamerican Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and huge sums. I am the Chairman of the subcommittee that handles that legislation, and I was pleading yesterday to be able to delay it a little while because of this occasion.

But, as the Majority Leader told me, he said, "Senator, you are a member of the Senate leadership, and you know that we have been telling everyone that we want to get our work done. And, our work is over here, not over there. I think I knew what he meant. So we have been in session since 9:30 this morning, and I have made the opening statement on the International Financial Institutions Act, and now I want to make a very brief statement here as a part of your program, and I hope that you will understand that if what I say to you is not as coherent as I would like it, it is because I am going to hop, skip and jump around in an effort to leave you with just a few questions, not answers.

You are the ones that come up with the answers. I raise some of the questions. But, we do have some copies of what is billed on your program as the keynote address. That

1 always frightens me and it ought to terrify you. And, if you  
2 want them, I think they will be available.

3 First, it is a singular privilege to share in this  
4 symposium, and the topic could only be one that was proscribed  
5 or defined by the Smithsonian or Dillon Ripley, "Man and  
6 Communities, the Peopling of America." That says so much, and  
7 yet it leaves so much to be said. And then I am very partic-  
8 ularly honored by being presented today or being the recipient  
9 of the Institution's Joseph Henry Medal. This is a singular  
10 honor. I understand that it has come to a very few, and there-  
11 fore it is much cherished. So, I thank you very much.

12 The Smithsonian has a very special place in my heart.  
13 I had the opportunity to serve on its board, and, as has been  
14 indicated, I have been the first Chairman of the Board of the  
15 Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and one of  
16 our fine new programs and endeavors.

17 But, you know, I think that James Smithson, the  
18 Englishman who endowed this institution so generously even  
19 though he never visited the United States, would be particularly  
20 pleased with the symposium that is being held today, of  
21 course, with the vast array of endeavors and accomplishments  
22 of the Smithsonian Institution. Really, these accomplishments  
23 are outstanding.

24 The Folk Festival that is held every summer, Dillon  
25 is one of the real highlights of the Smithsonian program. For...

1 I believe, is the Queen of England's official birthday. So,  
2 I would like to take the opportunity of saluting Queen Elizabeth  
3 and adding my congratulations in this year of her jubilee  
4 celebration. I have been watching it occasionally on television.  
5 ion.

6 She has been an outstanding example of dedication to  
7 her family, and that fits into this program. And, to her  
8 country in her 25 years on the throne. Now, the Smithsonian  
9 is a learning center. I am going to get our commercials in  
10 here today, Dillon, while I have a chance.

11 It is a learning center where youngsters can get  
12 their first glimpse at a DC-3, or a Linbergh Spirit of St.  
13 Louis. And scholars can continue to explore the mysteries  
14 that have puzzled the mind of Man for hundreds of years. And,  
15 I am proud of this institution, proud of its master minds so  
16 to speak, Dillon Ripley and others who have distinguished themselves  
17 in making this institution a working, lively, instrument  
18 of communication and of education and of scholarship in the  
19 American Scene.

20 And I am going to try to discuss for a few minutes  
21 here your topic, because it is one that seems to me is so important.  
22 As I said in the beginning, it leaves so much to your  
23 imagination. But, where do you begin such a discussion? Well,  
24 I suppose that we could begin, as it says in Genesis, "In the  
25 Beginning". I guess you begin where God began when he created

1. the first man and the first woman.

2. He began with the family, which is the basic social  
3. institution of all civilization, and of all humanity. I have  
4. asked myself again and again why are we seeing what appears  
5. to be at least, a growing disintegration of the family? Because  
6. it is my judgement that the social disintegration that is taking  
7. place is the major problem that confronts our society. It is  
8. much more serious than the energy problem, much more serious  
9. than whether or not cities pay their bills.

10. All of these other matters that we talk about, crime,  
11. alcoholism, whatever it may be, these are but symptoms of a  
12. much more fundamental disease, or fundamental problem. If  
13. I go back only as far as my childhood, and I see my sister  
14. and my niece here today, and my sister, in particular Francis,  
15. will remember our wonderful home out in South Dakota. Now,  
16. we were very simple people, and I am very proud of that. I  
17. am very happy that I can stand before an audience and say that  
18. I do not come from what we call "blue bloods".

19. But, I come from very simple, hard working stock.  
20. I can see examples of what I thought was good as I reflect on  
21. that home life. And, I can also compare it with what I see  
22. today. I am talking about the interaction among family members,  
23. the shared concern.

24. When I was growing up in these small towns out in  
25. South Dakota, because we moved a couple of times, parents and

children, they knew each other, we had time for each other. Now, I am not sure that this was characteristic of everybody, but most of the people that I knew, in that limited environment, we did have time for each other. It was natural for children to learn the lessons of life in their most useful form, by observation and by participation, by being in the family unit, in the family circle.

In our cities of today, you know it often takes a very special effort to get the whole family together, and once again I want to go back to what I heard Margaret Mead say, "The family is not just our biological family, it is a larger family. It is the family, yes, of ourselves, mother, father, children, relatives. But, it is also the family of the community."

The most influential person in my life was my father. And, may I also add that the one that gave me the best understanding of what the true meaning in life was in deep religion was my mother. I was lucky. We didn't have very much money; we didn't talk very much about poverty; everybody was poor or anyhow, that would be talking about yourself. But, we really weren't poor in the sense of the poverty of spirit. We had spirit. We had hope, we had love. Oh, we had debates and arguments too. Lots of family music as I put it, a certain amount of family noise.

But, we were a family. I was born above a drug



store, raised inside of one. I know life inside of a store at the age of 18 than when I graduated from the university. I have often wondered why I went to college. I was brought up in it; it was part of my life. But more importantly, business was not just business. Business was also conversation. It was fellowship. My father's business was open, not only to the customers that wanted to buy our product, but it was every day conversation, dialogue. We didn't even use the word "dialogue", we just talked to each other.

Our interests were centered around school, church, some community. Community activities, yes, they weren't too fancy, but it was there, and I met some remarkable people. I met more interesting people in the little town of 600 to 700 people than any place in my life. I have been in public life for a long time and I am supposed to have met all kinds of interesting people, but I tell you there were none more interesting than old Joe Garwick out in Delford, South Dakota. None more interesting than LeBris. I can name these people, A.J. sky.

There were a lot of them. These were intelligent, wonderful people, and we understood each other. We communicated. We had all of the debates, the arguments, all of the interplay, interaction that you can imagine. I have a wonderful privilege to grow up in that kind of environment. I grant that my perspective on the world wasn't too big. I know

to Washington as a boy. I did not go to the city

during a basketball tournament at Great Falls.

So, my horizons weren't too big. But my imagination  
lited. And I also was brought up with books and music.  
y. That was a part of our family fair. Mother made  
ate home, she knew how to keep a good home. And my  
aw how to embellish it. I can tell you that Dad  
all records in the drug store. Very interesting,  
really sold any, he just bought them. And then he  
ng them home, because mother was always worried about  
, you know, we never had enough to get a new rug or  
new rug or anything that we want. And now would  
wondering when that great day would come when we  
decorate.

The next thing dad would be coming home with these  
d records. They were expensive in those days. Mother  
, "Why are you bringing these records home, dad?" He  
1, mom, I over bought; they just didn't sell. Now  
hey weren't going to sell. But I tell you what, the  
ost beautiful music in our home. I remember my father  
dio time at the local radio station. This is when  
to a town of about 12,000.

And he used to read poetry, and somebody came to  
aid, "Mr. Humphrey, do you think there is a business  
o be up there reading poetry?" And dad said, "No, I

if my money, I buy the time, I like to read poetry. And, if I want to read poetry, I want to read poetry.

Well, those are precious memories. What I guess I am trying to say is that we were very much a family, but ours was not unique. There are many others, and there were even more in days gone by. And, I tried to fashion my own relationship with my children on somewhat of a similar pattern, but I have not done it as well, because public life, there friends, leaves little time for family life, very little time.

There is no forty-hour week, there is no dinner at home with the children. I had lunch with my family only when I had the influenza. ~~I wouldn't know, if I ever came home~~ to lunch, Mrs. Humphrey would faint. But, we always had breakfast together as a family, and it has become a very important hour in our home. When the children were little, before they went off to school, and we tried to have Sundays together, breakfast and Sundays <sup>were</sup> family time.

And then I had a sort of unwritten contract with my wife Myrtal, <sup>private</sup> and while the children were little, she gave ~~them~~ <sup>to them</sup> of her time unstintingly. We were not much in the social circle in Washington. As a matter of fact, it is slightly boring after you have been around a few times. These receptions give you varicose veins as you stand; you keep meeting the same people too.

So we just sort of divided up our work. I was the

ic man, she was the private woman. And I think that if we were able to rear a family, and many times people have, "How are your boys?" I say, well, they are not at all; are coming along all right. "How is your daughter?" Well, I tell you she is a fine mother. And, our sons are just hary, good young men.

And, I think they are trying to also bring up their lies. We promote that. I thought I would take these home to tell you about that, because it takes time, it takes. We have a little home out in Minnesota. I go home there y weekend, well, with few exceptions. In the winter time s not that easy.

But, I go home. And, all during the years when our dren were little, we had that home there. We couldn't afford but we had it. And, I have often said that that home d us hospital bills, most likely a divorce, and most ly may I say a disintegration of our family, because the sures on you in public life, on time, the demands, the tations, they are tremendous. And, it has been sort of eting ground to us. And, even this pass weekend it was same thing.

Children now, they are grown to manhood, but their children come back to the nest, because Mother is there, dad was there this weekend. I tell you that investment hat family life is what counts. Now, I am a public man.

pose you expect me to talk to you about housing. I know little about that. If you want one speech on that, or come to it a little bit later. I can talk to you about jobs, am deeply concerned about it, and don't misunderstand. Housing is important, jobs are important, and our national product is important. The rebuilding of the social structure of our cities. All of this is tremendously important.

All all of this makes a contribution to what we might call "sense of community", and, hopefully, an enduring and family life. But, unless there is a will of the individual to make the family life a truly meaningful experience, of give and understanding, of give and take and of sharing, the housing in the world and all the jobs in the world help you. Because so many of us have seen people of wealth and privilege miserable, families broken up, segregated. They have no moorings.

Now, that is not to be interpreted as being a lack of interest on my part or on your part. It is the great material and social service needs of our people. These things must be met. And, today is a far different world than I grew up as a child, that I know. The family unit is as vital today as it was 20, 30, 40 years ago. I don't care how many T.V. sets or how many cars you have, or how many telephones, or how many



sums, or how many cultural institutions you have, that unless you have the will to make a family unit an operating institution of love and understanding, of education and communication, of fellowship and sharing, that all of this is for naught. You are just spending your time spinning your wheels, and use your resources.

At least, that is my experience. I remember one experience in 1960 on election night. My wife celebrated only my re-election to the United States Senate, the birth of our first grandchild, and she was named Vicki, to celebrate in the child's name our political victory. It was on the very night of my re-election.

The next day we learned from the doctors that Vicki was retarded, a victim of Down's syndrome. We had never heard anything like this in our family. We asked the doctor, "there is no such thing." But there it was. Why not? Why were we the ones? We asked a thousand times. My daughter Nancy, a trained nurse, her husband, a young business man, Marie and I literally wept all evening over the news and shock by Vicki's condition.

We were frightened by our lack of knowledge about education. I am sure what the future holds in store for individuals being told to grow up in an institution. I hate that "institution". We want to institution everywhere. It is humanizing. I love the word "community".

The decision was made to rear Vicky at home, not on a basis of medical advice, but on the basis of ethical understanding, moral commitment. I believe in the healing power of love, and I am no preacher, I am a sinner, and know it. But, I believe in it, and I believe in the healing power of positive thinking, of not giving in, of knowing that you can do better. And, I have had to experience some of this in my private life.

Well, I cannot tell you what a source of joy and love this little girl has been to us, how her handicap would lead into a whole new dimension of life, and more particularly how it would lead my wife Muriel into some of the most satisfying and productive work that she has ever experienced. And now we have been able to work with other families and share with them their grief, and then raise their hopes. And how we have been able to work with teachers and medical specialists for whom retardation is a special concern.

Just this past week we dedicated community residences, they are called the Muriel Humphrey residences, out in Minnesota, in the Eden Valley, where young adults, retarded, will live in a normal community life, ~~getting them~~ <sup>and</sup> out of the warehouses, <sup>me</sup> putting them into homes where there ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> parents in those homes, foster parents, to be sure, but where these young adults will live a normal life, go to the shopping centers, go to the schools, have special training programs.

<sup>Beautiful</sup> Beautiful homes they are. I remember the community



didn't want them at first, and I said to one member of the community, Is it because the homes are going to be too beautiful because they are architectural dreams? Now everybody is happy about it. <sup>on</sup> Sunday <sup>of</sup> this week we dedicated a \$2 million opportunity workshop for the retarded, getting these people out of the shadows, out into the bright sunshine, letting them become part of the community, <sup>with</sup> <sup>and</sup> loved compassion. ~~There isn't quite enough of it. It is talked about, or acted upon.~~

Well, ~~What~~ I guess I am saying is that the family is the basic moral, educational and economic <sup>element</sup> ~~factor~~, or economic factor in our society. We know this, we know it is vital to human development, and I think therefore that it is imperative that those of us who recognize <sup>its</sup> ~~this~~ importance, accept the responsibility for taking steps that are necessary to preserve the family's moral foundation, and we have no time to spare.

The breakdown of the family unit is occurring at an unprecedented rate. The extended family in this country is all but extinct. That is where you have mother, father, children, and possibly grandmother, grandfather or a relative. I have got all of the figures here on that. There are many reasons for the breakdown of the family unit; a fast changing society, technological change overwhelming people, mass transportation, the speed of our times, an avalanche of information that literally is overwhelming us.

Yes, a loosening of morals, a more permissive attitude, religious indifference possibly, but there are many other actors. We have to ask ourselves, what has been the effect of urbanization on our homes and families and neighborhoods? What has been the impact of increasing necessity, of mothers and wives as well as their husbands and fathers who enter the labor force in order to meet the increased costs of living?

With the result that almost one half of our women in our nation are working today. And they ought to have the right. But we have to make some compensation for it, some kind of readjustments in our social organization for this change that has taken place, because the change is here, and you are not going to reverse it.

So, I guess what I am trying to say is, what we need to understand a little bit more about America's families. It is unfortunate that so many of us when we talk about morality, for example, they think you are talking about sexual behavior, misbehavior, promiscuity and adultery and the like. This is a very serious misunderstanding, and shows a very narrow conception because morality concerns every kind of human behavior.

I have seen these moralists who always worry about whether you are playing cards, or whether you happen to drink, whether you are chasing a woman. And, I think morality ought to go a little bit further. How do you treat people?

I remember one time I heard some preacher say, "the way you treat God is the way you treat people".

So, really when I am speaking of morality, I am talking about every kind of human behavior, towards ourselves, towards our fellow human beings, other living creatures, and even the Earth itself. Environmental protection is morality; conservation of our resources is morality. Abuse and waste of our resources is immoral. And the abuse and waste of ourselves is the worst of the immoralities.

Now, Man is a unique creature. And, I say Man in the generic sense, Man and Woman, human specie. Because Man alone is aware of himself as a separate being, with the ability to choose how he will act, and the ability to assess the consequences of his actions upon himself, his family and his community.

This special quality of Man, this knowledge of good and evil is a great miracle and a great mystery. It is also a terrible burden. No one has ever really understood why it is that Man knows that some actions are good and others are not. Philosophers have been trying to understand and explain this for thousands of years.

And, of course, we find it even in the Old Testament. It is simply and beautifully told in the story of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis, <sup>the</sup> moment at which Man became human when he acquired his soul and his freedom. Now, whether you accept

the Biblical account literally, which is your privilege, or as a parable, that expresses the deepest and most mysterious truths about the human condition, the fact is that at some point, Mankind, human beings, did acquire the knowledge to be able to differentiate between good and evil, between that which was acceptable and that which was not.

We may not understand how we know that some things are good or evil, or why we know it. But we do know that different human institutions may appear on the surface. No matter how infinite the variety of geographical, historical and cultural peculiarities they represent, they have one thing in common, they are <sup>the</sup> means by which one generation passes on to the next the rules of social and individual behavior which are necessary for survival.

That is what the family unit has done over the generations and the centuries. Now everyone knows that Man is a social animal. That is a cliché literally. But I imagine that too few of us have ever really stopped to think what it means. As I see it, what it comes down to is this: If we deny the existence of any ethical standards, if we deny our responsibility for ourselves, for the people we love, the people our fellow human beings, we cannot survive as individuals, -- as a society.

In other words, you cannot survive as a society and even as an individual by self-centered conception. If we

not live by some standards of truth and justice, of kindness and respect for the integrity and the rights of others, we perish, we will lose our humanity.

So that when we speak of civil rights and civil liberties of others, we are really protecting ourselves, because the only protection that one has in the ultimate is the family, the community, the larger community in which we live. Now, you don't subscribe to this, you might consider the frightening example of what I read about, and Margaret Mead knows a lot about this in one minute than I will know in a month.

The example of the Eke, a tribe of nomadic hunters and gatherers who lived in northern Uganda along the borders of Kenya and Sudan. A few years ago that valley where they did most of their hunting was set aside by the government as a national park and a wildlife sanctuary. And the Eke tribe was forced off their land in order to become farmers.

Unfortunately, the mountains where they live have actually no fertile soil, and very little water. For them it was a death sentence. None of their institutions, religion, family and work, were organized for settled life as farmers. And so they were useless in the struggle to adapt to a new way of life, and they were abandoned one by one, and the life of the tribe became simply the battle of each individual to obtain enough food for himself, or herself, to keep from one day to the next.



The family and the society of the tribe had disintegrated. Children were abandoned by their parents. Anyone who could not obtain food for himself, the sick, the elderly, the weak, the timid, was left to die of starvation. Now, Cullen Turnbull, the anthropologist who tells this story of the Ika in his book, The Mountain People, believes that their experience should be a warning to all of us.

Our families too are breaking down under the strain of too rapid technological and social progress. This is what was referred to earlier here today. The parallel with our family structure is all too frightening, and we must learn from the past in order to analyze our present, and predict our future.

As George Santayana reminds us, "those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it". Now, we have been going through a period in which nobody wanted to think about their past. Young people didn't want to learn history. And I have been reading about that they have very little knowledge of geography. We call this the "New generation". What is important is now.

But the problem with now is that it disappears. And I think what is more important is to remember that simple little phrase that many of you have seen in some colored postcard of the little child skipping through the wild flowers in the field, and she says, "Today is the first day of the rest of my

life", the future and building on the heritage of the past.

Somehow, some way in this great country, fast moving, changing, with news flashes every five, ten, fifteen seconds, we are going to have to remember where we have been, as well as where we are if we are going to have any understanding of where we are going. And whether this can be done in our school system or not, I am not quite sure. I hope so, more emphasis in it.

But again, as I said in the beginning, when we sat around our family table, we talked about grandpa and grandma, we talked about our heritage, we talked about the problems of the day and we dreamed of what could be tomorrow. That was the cement that held us together in many ways. But, regrettably there is an emphasis today that what is happening now is all that is important, without any understanding of how it came about.

So we treat symptoms rather than causes. And we lay no plans for the tomorrows. Well, I have much more that I wanted to tell you. What I think that I should end up by saying ~~is~~ that it is not a question of our abolishing our institutions and starting all over. I have heard people say that we have lost our way. Maybe some, but possibly what we ought to be saying is that we are looking for a better way.

And sometimes in that process of looking for a better way there seems to be some confusion. But, if there is that



sense of community, that sense of togetherness, that sense of understanding of our past as well as our present, we have some morays, we have some guidelines, we have some way of finding that better way.

You know, Man studies the miracles, but the greatest miracle of all is Man himself, and the greatest mystery. One of the things that has always bothered me about 'scholarship', with the exception of a few, is that we are constantly studying the works of Man, rather than why and how Man works. What is it that motivates us? What is this all about, we ourselves? A sense of appreciation of who we are, what we are and why we are.

So, what we must do as I see it, is to come to a new understanding of ourselves as moral and responsible human beings. There is no substitute for self-discipline, no amount of law can impose it, as well as <sup>an</sup> individual will. And there is no freedom in the jungle. Freedom requires also respect for authority and for law, as well as the right to change authority and law.

We possess this miraculous gift of knowledge, knowledge of good and evil and the ability to choose between them. I think that it must be said that we cannot escape the consequences of our own individual behavior. Therefore we must accept responsibility for our actions, and not just rely upon legislators and presidents and governors and senators as a way or

means or the instruments of ~~getting~~ <sup>giving</sup> us direction.

Perhaps the fate of Man is best described in the new novel by Reynolds Price, Surface of the Earth, which chronicles a family of four generations spanning the years 1903 to 1944, by the character who simply says, "We are very plain people, we are the history of the world". We do not have all the answers. In fact, we have very few. ~~I am rebuilding~~ <sup>But I must</sup> a sense of responsibility within our families and our communities.

We have to keep asking ourselves, How do we regain or restore a sense of community, of belonging, of saying, "This is my neighborhood, this is where I live, these are my people." How do we reestablish the close personal relationships that have characterized the family throughout the many generations?

I think that these should be the two central questions of this conference, and it is precisely the purpose of this conference to begin to search for these answers. Let us therefore dedicate ourselves to establishing this issue ~~of being~~ <sup>as our</sup> highest national priority. Let it be said of this year and this conference that this is where the movement began in America's third century to build a better life for future generations of American families, not only American individuals. Not only our individual rights, but the American family unit is the protector and indeed the enhancer of each our individual.

and our liberties. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. RIPLEY: I think we heard more than possibly the Senate is going to be hearing. But I think of a more cogent message, perhaps. In any case, I want to tell you how much this message meant to us at the Smithsonian, and that we are going to have it as a continuation of last year's message. It was a triumphant year incidentally. Not the birthday because it represented the culmination of the year for that birthday.

The birthday, in a sense, is just a way of thinking about the past leads us forward, at the century and the next hundred years, for which we are preparing from the first day of 1900 to the first day of 2000. All for being here this morning. I am glad to be here of our seminar and joining with you in the future of all of us in humanity. So now we are going to speak. I think we are going to break what is a long time, we are going to be having luncheon and after lunch. Thank you so very much.

(Applause.)



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