

TALKING POINTS

HUTCHINSON HEIGHTS FUNDRAISING DINNER

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

- LINCOLN STATED THAT "GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO ONLY THAT WHICH PEOPLE CANNOT DO FOR THEMSELVES." IN A COUNTRY WHERE INDIVIDUALS ARE INVESTED WITH A MAXIMUM DEGREE OF FREEDOM, THE GOVERNED MUST ACCEPT AN EQUAL MEASURE OF RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THE SYSTEM'S DYNAMIC BALANCE AND PERPETUATION.
- AN EXAMPLE OF THIS CONCEPT IS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS HERE IN HUTCHINSON AND IS THE REASON THAT WE ARE ALL HERE THIS EVENING. AS YOU KNOW, A GROUP OF DISABLED PERSONS, THEIR FAMILIES AND CONCERNED COMMUNITY LEADERS ARE DEVELOPING A RESIDENTIAL INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER HERE IN HUTCHINSON FOR ADULTS WITH SEVERE PHYSICAL DISABILITIES. IT WILL BE THE FIRST BARRIER-FREE, COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL CENTER IN KANSAS FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED ADULTS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE INSTITUTIONALIZED OR COMPLETELY DEPENDENT UPON THEIR FAMILITES FOR LIFELONG CARE.
- DUE TO SKYROCKETING DISABILITY COSTS AT A TIME OF A MOUNTING FEDERAL DEFICIT, WE MUST FIND WAYS TO MANAGE OUT RESOURCES MORE EFFICIENTLY. COMMUNITY PROGRAMS SUCH AS HUTCHINSON HEIGHTS WILL PREVENT COSTLY INSTITUTIONALIZATION, PROMOTE GREATER PRODUCTIVITY, AND ARE BEING DEVELOPED WITH STRONG PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP RATHER THAN GREATER GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES.
- AS A RESULT OF IMPROVED MEDICAL CARE, OUR NATION HAS HAD TO CONFRONT A NEW REALITY: AMERICA NOW IS THE HOME OF OVER 36 MILLION DISABLED INDIVIDUALS. MOREOVER, OUR NATION IS ALSO THE HOME OF INCREASING NUMBERS OF OLDER AMERICANS LEARNING TO COPE WITH THE DISABILITIES AND CHRONIC CONDITIONS THAT OFTEN ACCOMPANY ADVANCED AGE.
- WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON WHAT HANDICAPPED PERSONS ARE CAPABLE OF CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR SOCIETY, RATHER THAN ON THE LIMITATIONS WHICH MIGHT PREVENT THEM FROM ACTIVE PARTICIPATION.

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- IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE PEOPLE WHO WE CALL "HANDICAPPED" ARE REAL PEOPLE WHO WANT THE SAME THINGS THAT YOU AND I DO. THEY WANT AN EDUCATION, A JOB, AND A PLACE TO LIVE.
- IT IS DIFFICULT FOR A NONDISABLED PERSON TO APPRECIATE THE WILL AND THE COURAGE, AS WELL AS THE FRUSTRATIONS, THAT A DISABLED PERSON IS CONSTANTLY FACED WITH AS THEY STRUGGLE TO BECOME FULL PARTICIPANTS IN OUR SOCIETY. ALL OF US, DISABLED OR NOT, SHARE THE BASIC JOY OF ACTIVE, EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING, NO MATTER WHAT OUR DISABILITY.
- KANSAS COMMUNITIES HAVE A STRONG TRADITION OF HELPING PEOPLE HELP THEMSELVES. I KNOW, BECAUSE I WAS BLESSED BY THIS HUMAN KINDNESS AND SUPPORT WHEN MY FUTURE WAS IN DOUBT.