

"HANDICAPPED AMERICANS"

REMARKS OF U.S. SENATOR BOB DOLE (R-KANS.)

ANNUAL MEETING

PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1969

MY REMARKS TODAY CONCERN AN EXCEPTIONAL GROUP WHICH I JOINED 24 YEARS AGO DURING WORLD WAR II.

IT IS A MINORITY GROUP WHOSE EXISTENCE AFFECTS EVERY PERSON IN OUR SOCIETY AND THE VERY FIBER OF OUR NATION.

IT IS A GROUP WHICH NO ONE JOINS BY PERSONAL CHOICE -- A GROUP WHOSE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP ARE NOT BASED ON AGE, SEX, WEALTH, EDUCATION, SKIN COLOR, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, POLITICAL PARTY, POWER, OR PRESTIGE.

AS A MINORITY, IT HAS ALWAYS KNOWN EXCLUSION -- MAYBE NOT EXCLUSION FROM THE FRONT OF A BUS, BUT PERHAPS FROM EVEN CLIMBING ABOARD IT; MAYBE NOT EXCLUSION FROM PURSUING ADVANCED EDUCATION, BUT PERHAPS FROM EXPERIENCING ANY FORMAL EDUCATION; MAYBE NOT FROM DAY-TO-DAY LIFE ITSELF, BUT PERHAPS FROM AN ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP AND CONTRIBUTE TO HIS OR HER FULLEST CAPACITY.

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IT IS A MINORITY, YET A GROUP TO WHICH AT LEAST ONE OUT OF EVERY FIVE AMERICANS BELONGS.

I SPEAK TODAY ABOUT 42 MILLION CITIZENS OF OUR NATION WHO ARE PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, OR EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED.

- WHO ARE THE HANDICAPPED? -

THE HANDICAPPED ARE PERSONS -- MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN -- WHO CANNOT ACHIEVE FULL PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL POTENTIAL BECAUSE OF DISABILITY.

ALTHOUGH SOME LIVE IN INSTITUTIONS, MANY MORE LIVE IN THE COMMUNITY. SOME ARE SO SEVERELY DISABLED AS TO BE HOMEBOUND, OR EVEN BED-BOUND. STILL OTHERS ARE ABLE TO TAKE PART IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES WHEN THEY HAVE ACCESS AND FACILITIES.

THEY INCLUDE AMPUTEES, PARAPLEGICS, POLIO VICTIMS. CAUSES OF DISABILITY INCLUDE ARTHRITIS, CARDIO-VASCULAR DISEASES, MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, AND MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY.

WHILE YOU MAY HAVE GOOD VISION AND HEARING, MANY PERSONS LIVE EACH DAY WITH LIMITED EYESIGHT OR HEARING, OR WITH NONE AT ALL.

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WHILE YOU MAY ENJOY FULL MUSCLE STRENGTH AND COORDINATION IN YOUR LEGS, THERE ARE THOSE WHO MUST RELY ON BRACES OR CRUTCHES, OR PERHAPS A WALKER OR WHEELCHAIR.

WHILE YOU PERFORM DAILY MILLIONS OF TASKS WITH YOUR HANDS AND ARMS, THERE ARE MANY WHO LIVE WITH LIMITED OR TOTAL DISABILITY IN THEIRS.

AND IN CONTRAST TO MOST PEOPLE, THOUSANDS OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN SUFFER MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL DISORDERS WHICH HINDER THEIR ABILITIES TO LEARN AND APPLY WHAT IS LEARNED AND TO COPE ADEQUATELY WITH THEIR FAMILIES, JOBS, AND COMMUNITIES.

THEN THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE AFFLICTED WITH COMINBATION OR MULTIPLE HANDICAPS.

- NOT JUST THE HANDICAP -

FOR OUR NATION'S 42 MILLION HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES, YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW ARE NOT FILLED WITH "EVERYDAY" KINDS OF PROBLEMS WHICH CAN BE SOLVED OR SOOTHED BY "EVERYDAY" KINDS OF ANSWERS. THEIR DAILY CHALLENGE IS: ACCEPTING AND WORKING WITH A DISABILITY SO THAT THE HANDICAPPED PERSON CAN BECOME AS ACTIVE AND USEFUL, AS INDEPENDENT, SECURE, AND DIGNIFIED AS HIS ABILITY WILL ALLOW.

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TOO MANY HANDICAPPED PERSONS LEAD LIVES OF LONELINESS AND DESPAIR;
TOO MANY FEEL AND TOO MANY ARE CUT OFF FROM OUR WORK-ORIENTED SOCIETY;
TOO MANY CANNOT FILL EMPTY HOURS IN A SATISFYING, CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER.
THE LEISURE MOST OF US CRAVE CAN AND HAS BECOME A CURSE TO MANY OF OUR
NATION'S HANDICAPPED.

OFTEN WHEN A HANDICAPPED PERSON IS ABLE TO WORK FULL OR PART TIME,
THERE ARE FEW JOBS OR INADEQUATE TRAINING PROGRAMS IN HIS LOCALE. ALTHOUGH
PROGRESS IS BEING MADE, MANY EMPLOYERS ARE HESITANT TO HIRE A HANDICAPPED
PERSON, IGNORING STATISTICS THAT SHOW HE IS OFTEN A BETTER AND MORE
DEPENDABLE WORKER.

THE RESULT IS THAT ABILITIES OF A PERSON ARE OVERLOOKED BECAUSE OF
DISABILITIES WHICH MAY BEAR LITTLE OR NO TRUE RELATION TO THE JOB AT
HAND. THE RESULT TO THE TAXPAYER MAY BE TO SUPPORT ONE MORE PERSON AT
A COST OF AS MUCH AS \$3,500 PER PERSON A YEAR. TO THE HANDICAPPED PERSON
HIMSELF, IT MEANS MORE DEPENDENCY.

- STATISTICS -

CONSIDER THESE STATISTICS: ONLY ONE THIRD OF AMERICA'S BLIND AND
LESS THAN HALF OF THE PARAPLEGICS OF WORKING AGE ARE EMPLOYED, WHILE
ONLY A HANDFUL OF ABOUT 200,000 PERSONS WITH CEREBRAL PALSY WHO ARE OF
WORKING AGE ARE EMPLOYED.

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BEYOND THIS, FAR TOO MANY HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES BEAR SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS -- DESPITE TOKEN GOVERNMENT PENSIONS AND INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR A FEW, AND OTHER FINANCIAL AIDS. I RECALL A PORTION OF A LETTER RECEIVED RECENTLY FROM THE MOTHER OF A CEREBRAL PALSY CHILD IN A MIDWESTERN URBAN AREA:

THERE ARE THE NEVER-ENDING SURGERIES, BRACES; ORTHOPEDIC SHOES, WHEELCHAIRS, WALKERS, STANDING TABLES, BATH TABLES, AND SO ON...WE PARENTS FOLLOW UP ON EVERY HOPEFUL LEAD IN CLINICS AND WITH SPECIALISTS; WE GO UP AND DOWN PATHS BLINDLY AND ALWAYS EXPENSIVELY...I HAVE TALKED WITH FOUR MAJOR INSURANCE COMPANIES WHO DO NOT INSURE OR INFREQUENTLY INSURE CP CHILDREN...ALTHOUGH OUR DAUGHTER IS INCLUDED IN HER FATHER'S GROUP HOSPITALIZATION PLAN, MANY FAMILIES ARE NOT AS FORTUNATE. THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE PROBLEMS, COMPOUNDED BY THE FACT WE MUST TRY TO ADEQUATELY MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR OTHER "NORMAL" CHILDREN. IN MANY CASES, SOME KIND OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WOULD ENABLE US AND OTHERS LIKE US TO PROVIDE FOR OUR CHILDREN IN OUR HOMES, AVOIDING OVERCROWDING OF ALREADY OVERCROWDED FACILITIES AND FURTHER ADDING TO THE TAXPAYER'S BURDEN COSTS FOR COMPLETE CARE.

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THERE ARE OTHER PROBLEMS -- AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS OF HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES AT THE TIME AND PLACE THE INDIVIDUAL WITH HANDICAPS NEEDS THEM. IN MY OWN LARGELY RURAL STATE OF KANSAS, MANY HANDICAPPED PERSONS TRAVEL 300 MILES OR MORE TO RECEIVE THE BASIC HEALTH SERVICES THEY REQUIRE.

EDUCATION PRESENTS DIFFICULTIES FOR MANY PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN. ALTHOUGH A CHILD MAY BE EDUCABLE, THERE MAY BE FEW, IF ANY, OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMUNITY FOR HIM TO RECEIVE AN EDUCATION. PRIVATE TUTORING, IF AVAILABLE, IS OFTEN TOO EXPENSIVE. SADLY, TO DATE, THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN ESTIMATES LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL EDUCATION ARE RECEIVING IT.

IN REHABILITATION, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE SAID RECENTLY 25 PERCENT OF AMERICA'S DISABLED HAVE NOT RECEIVED REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DO NOT KNOW WHERE TO SEEK SUCH HELP. THEY ESTIMATE THAT AT LEAST 5 MILLION DISABLED PERSONS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE.

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OTHER PROBLEMS THE HANDICAPPED PERSON FACES EACH DAY INCLUDE AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS OF RECREATION AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES, ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS IN RESIDENCES AND OTHER BUILDINGS, AND MANY, MANY MORE.

- STILL A PROMISING OUTLOOK -

WE IN AMERICA ARE STILL FAR FROM THE HALF-WAY POINT OF ASSURING THAT EVERY HANDICAPPED PERSON CAN BECOME AS ACTIVE AND USEFUL AS HIS CAPACITIES WILL ALLOW. THE OUTLOOK FOR THE HANDICAPPED PERSON IN 1969, HOWEVER, IS NOT ALTOGETHER BLEAK. UNPARALLELED ACHIEVEMENTS IN MEDICINE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY AS WELL AS IN PUBLIC ATTITUDES HAVE CEMENTED A FRAMEWORK IN WHICH THE HANDICAPPED PERSON TODAY HAS MORE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO HIM THAN EVER BEFORE. CONSIDER FIRST WHAT GOVERNMENT IS DOING.

- THE GOVERNMENT STORY -

THE STORY OF WHAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, HAND IN HAND WITH STATE GOVERNMENTS, IS DOING TO HELP MEET THE NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED IS NOT ONE THAT DRAWS THE BIGGEST AND BOLDEST HEADLINES. BROADLY, THE STORY IS A "GOOD" ONE, CONSISTING OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, REHABILITATION, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING OF THE HANDICAPPED -- A MASSIVE EFFORT TO HELP MANY DISABLED AMERICANS LIVE AS NORMAL, AS FULL AND RICH LIVES AS POSSIBLE.

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IT IS, IN PART, THE STORY OF A MAN WHO, AT AGE 21, BECAME A
PARAPLEGIC AFTER SUSTAINING INJURIES TO HIS SPINAL CORD AND HEAD IN
AN ACCIDENT WHILE ON THE JOB.

IN 1968, HE JOINED OVER 2,300,000 OTHER DISABLED MEN AND WOMEN
WHO HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO MORE PRODUCTIVE, USEFUL LIVES SINCE THE
STATE-FEDERAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM BEGAN 48 YEARS AGO.

IN 1964, THE YOUNG MAN -- A HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT WITH A WIFE AND
CHILD -- WAS REFERRED TO HIS STATE'S DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
WHERE A THOROUGH PROGRAM OF TOTAL REHABILITATION BEGAN. IN ADDITION,
HE WAS ENROLLED IN A TRAINING SCHOOL AND WAS GRADUATED AS A FULLY LICENSED
INSURANCE AGENT.

TODAY -- 4 YEARS LATER -- HE HAS HIS OWN SUCCESSFUL INSURANCE
BUSINESS. HE AND HIS WIFE HAVE BUILT A NEW HOME AND ADOPTED A BABY.

IT IS A MEASURE OF AMERICA'S CONCERN FOR ITS HANDICAPPED CITIZENS
THAT EVEN 50 YEARS AGO, THIS STORY COULD NOT HAVE BEEN TOLD.

✕ IT TAKES PLACE NOW BECAUSE THE CONGRESS AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
INITIATED AND GUIDED A VITAL, VIGOROUS PROGRAM OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION.

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VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION IS ONE OF MANY WAYS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WORKS TO AID THE HANDICAPPED. BUT NONE OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAMS NECESSARILY REACHES OR HELPS EVERY HANDICAPPED PERSON.

NEVERTHELESS, THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN BASICALLY SUCCESSFUL IN TERMS OF NUMBERS ASSISTED, BASIC RESEARCH PERFORMED, AND THE MOVEMENT OF INCREASINGLY LARGE NUMBERS OF PERSONS INTO MORE PRODUCTIVE, SATISFYING CHANNELS. IT DEMONSTRATES WHAT CONGRESS AND FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS ARE DOING TO HELP AMERICA'S HANDICAPPED BETTER PARTICIPATE AND ACHIEVE.

- THE PRIVATE SECTOR -

IT IS IN THE AMERICAN TRADITION AND SPIRIT THAT PARALLEL TO GOVERNMENT EFFORT THERE HAS DEVELOPED THE VITAL AND GROWING EFFORT FOR THE HANDICAPPED BY INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, CHURCHES AND PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS. IT IS A HERCULEAN TASK TO PROPERLY ASSESS THE MANY, FAR-REACHING EFFECTS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- IN HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT; IN RESEARCH, REHABILITATION, BY FUND RAISING DRIVES AND THROUGH PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS FOR THE HANDICAPPED THEMSELVES.

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BUT IT IS HERE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON THE CREATIVITY, CONCERN, AND ENERGIES OF OUR PEOPLE -- THAT AMERICA HAS BECOME THE ENVY OF THE WORLD. OUR PRIVATE ECONOMY AND THE RESOURCES OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE COMBINED TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN AMERICA IN WAYS AND FOR PERSONS THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT BEGIN TO MATCH OR REACH.

~~FOR THE HANDICAPPED, THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS HAVE BEEN NO LESS.~~ I SHALL NOT TODAY, DETAIL OR SINGLE OUT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE VOLUNTARY GROUPS AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE INVOLVED IN AIDING THE HANDICAPPED. BUT LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT WITHOUT THE SINCERITY, SCOPE, AND SUCCESS OF THEIR EFFORTS -- IN PUBLIC INFORMATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, IN UPGRADING HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES, IN FUND RAISING AND IN SUPPORTING RESEARCH TO CONQUER OR AT LEAST MINIMIZE THE EFFECTS OF HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS -- THE PROSPECTS FOR THE HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS WOULD NOT BE AS HOPEFUL AS THEY ARE TODAY.

- WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? -

AS NEW PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROGRAMS ARE DEVELOPED, AS OLD ONES ARE STRENGTHENED AND SOME, PERHAPS ELIMINATED, AS WE IN CONGRESS ALLOCATE COMPARATIVELY LIMITED FUNDS TO HELP THE HANDICAPPED, THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES LOOM LARGE BEFORE US.

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TOO OFTEN, THE INFORMATION, THE SERVICES, THE HUMAN HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT ARE NOT REACHING THE PERSON FOR WHOM THEY WERE INTENDED AND AT THE TIME AND PLACE HE NEEDS THEM.

SOME SINCERELY BELIEVE THERE MAY BE BETTER WAYS WE CAN DEMONSTRATE OUR CONCERN AND THEREBY BETTER ACHIEVE FOR THE PERSON WITH HANDICAPS THE INDEPENDENCE, SECURITY, AND DIGNITY TO WHICH HE IS ENTITLED.

I AM REMINDED OF A STATEMENT GIVEN RECENTLY BY THE 1968 PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION:

IT IS THE PERSON, NOT THE PROGRAM THAT IS OF OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE. IT IS NOT THE DISABILITY THAT CLAIMS OUR ATTENTION, IT IS THE PERSON WITH HANDICAPS. IT IS NOT THE MAINTENANCE OF PRESTIGE OF A PARTICULAR PROFESSION THAT MATTERS. IT IS THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PROFESSION TO SOLVING THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF THE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS HANDICAPS.

WHEN MORE OF THIS EMPHASIS ON THE INDIVIDUAL BETTER INFLUENCES THE AGENCIES AND PROFESSIONS DEALING WITH THE HANDICAPPED, I BELIEVE WE CAN BEGIN TO OPEN NEW, MORE MEANINGFUL VISTAS FOR MORE PERSONS WITH HANDICAPS.

WE HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN EFFORTS WHICH HAVE BEEN CREDITABLE TO DATE. OF THIS, THERE IS NO DOUBT.

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BUT ARE WE DOING OUR BEST?

A HIGHLY RESPECTED OFFICIAL OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE SUMMED UP THE PROBLEM THIS WAY:

I DO NOT FEEL WE ARE SPENDING OUR DOLLARS -- PUBLIC OR
VOLUNTARY -- AS EFFECTIVELY AS WE COULD. WE NEED TO TAKE
A WHOLE NEW LOOK AT WHAT IS GOING ON WHERE THE SERVICE IS
GIVEN. WE NEED TO TRY TO DESIGN NEW METHODS AND CLEARER
PURPOSES FOR OUR EFFORTS. WE NEED TO RELATE OUR EFFORTS
MORE CLOSELY TO THE NEEDS OF A COMMUNITY, TO THE NEEDS OF
ITS INDIVIDUALS. AND WE NEED TO TRY TO MEASURE, AS CON-
CRETELY AND SPECIFICALLY AS POSSIBLE WHAT IS ACTUALLY
ACHIEVED BY OUR EXPENDITURES.

OUT HANDICAPPED CITIZENS ARE ONE OF OUR NATION'S GREATEST UNMET
RESPONSIBILITIES AND UNTAPPED RESOURCES. WE MUST DO BETTER.

- PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE -

~~X~~ WITH THIS IN MIND, I HAVE SUGGESTED THE CREATION OF A PRESIDENTIAL
TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION TO REVIEW WHAT THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS
ARE DOING AND TO RECOMMEND HOW WE CAN DO BETTER.

COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS,
THIS TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION COULD PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF HOW TO PROVIDE
THE HANDICAPPED MORE HELP AND HOPE.

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SUCH A TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION COULD PROVIDE VALUABLE ASSISTANCE TO CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION AS WE DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND ALLOCATE COMPARATIVELY LIMITED FUNDS FOR THE HANDICAPPED.

IT COULD ALSO HELP PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS CONDUCT THEIR EFFORTS MORE EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY.

THE GOAL OF A TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION, TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM INDEPENDENCE, SECURITY, AND DIGNITY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL WITH HANDICAPS, SHOULD ENCOMPASS THE TOTAL NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED, NOT JUST EMPLOYMENT OR EDUCATION OR ANY OTHER SINGLE FACTOR.

RATHER THE TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION SHOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH THE WHOLE BROAD SPECTRUM OF NEEDS AND SERVICES, BECAUSE AS I HAVE POINTED OUT THE PROBLEMS OF THE HANDICAPPED DO NOT BEGIN AND END WITH THE HANDICAP ITSELF.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF AREAS A TASK FORCE OR COMMISSION COULD REVIEW, I AM HOPEFUL, IF CREATED, IT WOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

FIRST. EXPANSION OF EMPLOYMENT, TRANSPORTATION, AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HANDICAPPED.

SECOND. A DIRECTORY OR CENTRAL CLEARINGHOUSE TO HELP INFORM THE HANDICAPPED PERSON AND HIS FAMILY OF AVAILABLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE.

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THERE ARE MANY HELPFUL HANDBOOKS AND INFORMATION SOURCES AVAILABLE. BUT MOST ARE NOT COMPREHENSIVE AND ARE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD THAN TO THE HANDICAPPED WHO REALLY NEED THE GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION.

THIRD. REMOVAL OF ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS.

MANY PERSONS CANNOT SECURE EMPLOYMENT OR FILL THEIR LEISURE HOURS BECAUSE THEIR DISABILITIES BAR USE OF THE FACILITIES. IT IS JUST AS EASY TO BUILD AND EQUIP BUILDINGS SO THAT THE HANDICAPPED AND UNHANDICAPPED CAN USE THEM. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS DOING THIS NOW FOR FEDERALLY FINANCED STRUCTURES.

FOURTH. MORE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH CARE ON A REGIONAL OR COMMUNITY BASIS.

THIS IS A TOUGH, BUT PRIORITY MATTER AND ONE WHICH CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED QUICKLY OR INEXPENSIVELY. BUT WE MUST BEGIN TO MOVE TOWARD MORE ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL WHICH SERVE EACH PERSON AT THE TIME AND PLACE HE NEEDS THEM.

FIFTH. BETTER SERVING THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED.

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BOTH THE PERSON AND THE NATION SUFFER WHEN ANY EDUCABLE CHILD -- HANDICAPPED OR UNHANDICAPPED -- DOES NOT RECEIVE AN EDUCATION.

SIXTH. INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS AND/OR OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO EXTEND RELIEF TO MORE HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

SEVENTH. MORE ATTENTION ON THE FAMILY OF THE HANDICAPPED PERSON.

THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO OFTEN NEED A DEGREE OF ENCOURAGEMENT, COUNSELING, AND "REHABILITATION" THEMSELVES. ARE THERE SERVICES WE SHOULD PROVIDE TO FAMILY MEMBERS WHOSE OWN LIVES AND RESOURCES ARE DEEPLY AFFECTED BY THE PRESENCE OF A HANDICAPPED PERSON?

EIGHTH. INCREASED DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION BETWEEN PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO AVOID MULTIPLICITY AND DUPLICATION.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IS NOT THE AGENCY, GROUP OR PROGRAM. WHAT IS AT STAKE IS THE FUTURE OF THE HANDICAPPED PERSON WITH HIS OWN ABILITIES AND POTENTIALITIES.

- THE CHALLENGE -

I KNOW OF NO MORE IMPORTANT SUBJECT MATTER TO DISCUSS, NOT SOLELY BECAUSE OF MY PERSONAL INTEREST, BUT BECAUSE IN OUR GREAT COUNTRY SOME 42 MILLION AMERICANS SUFFER FROM A PHYSICAL, MENTAL, OR EMOTIONAL HANDICAP. AND I CONSIDER ADDRESSING THIS GROUP TODAY AS ONE OF THE GREATEST PRIVILEGES OF MY LIFE.

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THE TASK AHEAD IS MONUMENTAL, BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT THERE ARE FORCES IN AMERICA READY AND WILLING TO MEET THE CHALLENGE -- INCLUDING, OF COURSE, ALL OF YOU IN THIS ROOM.


YOUR COMMITTEES -- LOCAL, STATE, AND PRESIDENTIAL -- HAVE WORKED UNCEASINGLY TO BRING ABOUT PUBLIC AWARENESS -- AND TANGIBLE PROOF -- THAT DISABILITY NEED NOT BE A BARRIER TO DOING A SPECIFIC JOB WELL. YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ELIMINATING MANY EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS--PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL--FOR THE HANDICAPPED ARE WELL KNOWN.

PROBABLY THE ~~BEST~~ ^{strongest} TESTIMONY TO YOUR EFFORTS IS THE FACT THAT THE DESIRE TO FURTHER EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED IS BECOMING MORE WIDESPREAD EACH YEAR. MORE AND MORE PERSONS ARE VOLUNTEERING THEMSELVES TO THE "CAUSE". MORE AND MORE EMPLOYERS ARE RECOGNIZING THE ABILITIES OF THE HANDICAPPED EMPLOYEE AND HELPING HIM TO ACHIEVE HIS FULL POTENTIAL.

YOUR COMMITTEES ARE DOING A GREAT JOB NOW, AND THEY WILL BE NEEDED FOR A LONG TIME TO COME. THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION OR TASK FORCE I MENTIONED A FEW MINUTES AGO WOULD SUPPLEMENT YOUR WORK AND WOULD ADD TO THE STRENGTH OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE AND THE STATE AND LOCAL COMMITTEES.

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WHILE YOU ARE CONCERNED LARGELY WITH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PREPARATION AND THE ELIMINATION OF BARRIERS -- PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL, MY PROPOSAL WOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF NEEDS AND SERVICES FOR THE HANDICAPPED -- WITH THE TOTAL PICTURE...WITH RECREATION, CHILD AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE, SPECIAL EDUCATION, DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR TAX RELIEF; WITH HELPING THE FAMILIES OF THE HANDICAPPED, PROVIDING DIRECTORIES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AND SO ON.

 IT WAS SHAKESPEARE WHO SAID, "THE MISERABLE HATH NO OTHER MEDICINE BUT HOPE."

TOGETHER, WE ARE SLOWLY REMOVING THE HANDICAPPED FROM THE RANKS OF THE "MISERABLE" AND GIVING THEM NEW HOPE.

BUT WE MUST DO BETTER BECAUSE WE CAN DO BETTER. FORTY-TWO MILLION MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE COUNTING ON US.

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