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THE EASTER SEAL SOCIETY, DESERVEDLY, RECEIVES MORE RECOGNITION FOR ITS EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE HANDICAPPED THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE ORGANIZATION WORKING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED ON A BROAD SCALE.

PROBABLY THE GREATEST TESTIMONY TO THE EASTER SEAL SOCIETY'S EFFORTS IS THE FACT THAT THE DESIRE TO FURTHER ASSIST ~~THE~~ THE HANDICAPPED IS BECOMING WIDESPREAD THROUGHOUT AMERICA EVERY YEAR. MORE AND MORE PERSONS ARE VOLUNTEERING THEMSELVES TO THIS GREAT CAUSE.

AS THE FOUR-POINT OBJECTIVE OF YOUR PROGRAM STATES: THE SOCIETY SEEKS TO SERVE NOT ONLY HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES, BUT EFFORTS ARE DIRECTED TOWARD READING DEEPLY AND BROADLY INTO WHERE THE ACTION IS -- THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

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THE NET RESULT OF YOUR EFFORTS IS TO MAKE THE ^SDIABLED PRODUCTIVE AND WELCOME CONTRIBUTORS TO THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY LIVE. THE EMPHASIS WHICH THE SOCIETY PLACES UPON PEOPLE-ORIENTED SERVICES IS ONE OF YOUR MOST OUTSTANDING HALLMARKS. THROUGHOUT THE SOCIETY'S REHABILITATION CENTERS AND THROUGH THE PROGRAMS THESE CENTERS ADMINISTER, YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR THOUSANDS OF DISABLED INDIVIDUALS TO BECOME EQUIPPED--PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY == TO ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONSTRUCTIVE CITIZENSHIP. TODAY, THE FACILITIES OF THESE EASTER SEAL REHABILITATION CENTERS ARE THE MOST MODERN AND EMPLOY THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEORIES.

I SPOKE EARLIER OF THE BROAD NATURE OF YOUR SOCIETY'S PROGRAM. THE FOCUS IS NOT LIMITED TO THOSE WHO ARE PRESENTLY RECEIVING THE SOCIETY'S AID. REALIZING THE NUMBERS WHO ARE NOT REACHED PRESENTLY AND THOSE WHO ARE YET TO BE IN NEED OF YOUR EFFORTS, YOU HAVE GIVEN SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO ~~PROGRAMS FOR~~ ATTRACTING ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL TO THE REHABILITATION FIELD. THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS YOU ARE SEEKING TO BRING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE DEMANDING AND REWARDING PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR WORK. THROUGH PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, YOU CONTINUE TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE NEED FOR PEOPLE, IDEAS AND DEDICATED EFFORTS IN THE REHABILITATION FIELD.

THIS FULL-SPECTRUM APPROACH THE EASTER SEAL SOCIETY TAKES TO MEETING THE CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED IS TRULY INVALUABLE AND UNSURPASSED.

IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, I WOULD BE HIGHLY HONORED TO RECEIVE AN AWARD FROM THE EASTER SEAL SOCIETY. BUT THERE IS AN ADDITIONAL REASON WHY I AM ESPECIALLY MOVED IN RECEIVING THIS AWARD TONIGHT. MY INTEREST IN THE HANDICAPPED HAS GROWN FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. BEING A MEMBER OF A MINORITY GROUP OF 42 MILLION AMERICANS WHO ARE PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY OR EMOTIONALLY HANDICAPPED, HAS BROUGHT ME A HEIGHTENED AWARENESS OF THE NEEDS, PROBLEMS AND POTENTIALS OF THOSE CITIZENS.

MY FIRST MAJOR SPEECH IN THE SENATE WAS DEVOTED TO A DISCUSSION OF THE ONE IN EVERY FIVE OF US WHO LIVES WITH A HANDICAP.

IN THAT SPEECH I PROPOSED THE CREATION OF A PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON THE HANDICAPPED TO REVIEW THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW WE CAN DO EVEN BETTER TO SERVE THIS SEGMENT OF OUR SOCIETY.

BRIEFLY, THESE ARE THE SPECIFIC AREAS I URGED TO BE CONSIDERED
BY SUCH A TASK FORCE:

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.

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. 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 DIALOG 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.

I AM HIGHLY PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAS ANNOUNCED CREATION OF A TASK FORCE ON THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED ON OCTOBER 15. THIS GROUP HAS BEGUN ITS WORK, AND WE ALL LOOK FORWARD WITH GREAT ANTICIPATION TO ITS REPORT AROUND MID-DECEMBER.

HOWEVER, THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED REPRESENT ONLY PART OF OUR COUNTRY'S 42 MILLION-MEMBER MINORITY. IT IS MY HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL SOON APPOINT A SIMILAR TASK FORCE ON THE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED, SO THAT THE FULL DIMENSIONS OF THE HANDICAPPED CAN RECEIVE THE DEGREE OF ATTENTION WHICH WE ALL NEED FOR THEM TO RECEIVE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WISH TO EXTEND MY MOST SINCERE AND HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FOR THIS AWARD. BEST WISHES TO YOU AND THE EASTER SEAL SOCIETY'S CONTINUING EFFORTS TO SERVE THE HANDICAPPED, AND CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE PRODUCTIVE SOCIETY FOR US ALL.