

TALKING POINTS  
"UNITED TOGETHER" MEETING  
OCTOBER 23, 1981

- 1981 IS THE YEAR OF THE DISABLED PERSON. IT IS A PLEASURE TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO MAKE A FEW REMARKS BEFORE SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF PEOPLE REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF HANDICAPPED PEOPLE. WHEN REFERRING TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS, IT IS SIGNIFICANT TO NOTE THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN DESIGNATED THE "YEAR OF THE HANDICAPPED" -- THIS IS AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION.
- A DISABLED PERSON IS HANDICAPPED ONLY SO LONG AS HE OR SHE IS PREVENTED FROM ACHIEVING A GOAL, EARNING A LIVING, OR REALIZING A DREAM. THROUGHOUT MY LIFE, I HAVE DERIVED GREAT INSPIRATION FROM PERSONS I'VE KNOWN WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN CATEGORIZED AS BEING PHYSICALLY DISABLED, BUT WHO SURMOUNTED INCREDIBLE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO ATTAIN GREAT THINGS OF THE MIND OF SPIRIT. A LONG TIME AGO, I LEARNED THAT SYMPATHY IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A CHANCE TO DEVELOP ONE'S SKILLS AND A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN EVERYDAY COMMUNITY LIFE.

-2-

- ONE OF THE MAJOR THEMES OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN "JOBS, JOBS, AND MORE JOBS". CREATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S ECONOMIC PROGRAM, AND WE NEED TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS THAT WILL BE CREATED WILL GO TO PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WALK TO WORK OR RIDE IN A WHEELCHAIR, WHETHER OR NOT THEY CAN HEAR THE SOUNDS OF AN OFFICE AROUND THEM.
- THERE ARE THIRTY-FIVE MILLION AMERICANS OUT THERE WHO REPRESENT A VAST AND LARGELY UNTAPPED HUMAN RESOURCE -- WHO ASK FOR NOTHING BUT A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN EVERYDAY COMMUNITY LIFE AND TO SHARE THEIR TALENTS WITH THE REST OF THEIR SOCIETY.
- WE HAVE SEEN A LOT OF PROGRESS IN ASSISTANCE TO DISABLED AMERICANS DURING THE LAST DECADE. A LOT OF ARCHITECTURAL, ECONOMIC AND ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS HAVE YIELDED TO MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW TALENTS THAT DISABLED PERSONS REPRESENT. BARRIERS THAT HAVE TRADITIONALLY BLOCKED THE WAY TO PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE DISABLED HAVE GIVEN WAY TO THE RECOGNITION THAT THIS VALUABLE GROUP OF OUR CITIZENS HAS A LOT TO OFFER OUR SOCIETY. PHYSICAL MOBILITY HAS INCREASED, AND WE

- 3 -

MUST CONTINUE TO CHANNEL THE THEMES OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION INTO CONSTRUCTIVE MESSAGES TO ENHANCE THE PATH OF ECONOMIC MOBILITY AS WELL.

- WE ARE ALL AWARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF FISCAL AUSTERITY THAT PERVADES THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THESE DAYS. THE BUDGET IS UNDER SIEGE TO SOME HARD ECONOMIC REALITIES. HOWEVER IT MUST NOT, AND WILL NOT, BE BALANCED ON THE BACKS OF THOSE WHO ARE DEPENDENT UPON ITS SERVICES FOR THE BASICS THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN EVERYONE'S DAILY LIFE.
- ALTHOUGH THE DEMANDS ON OUR DOLLARS HAVE NEVER BEEN GREATER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN ANY DECREASE IN THE NEEDS OF OUR COUNTRY'S DISABLED. FORTUNATELY, PROGRAMS FOR THE DISABLED HAVE, SO FAR, ESCAPED THE SWING OF THE POWERFUL BUDGET AX. I THINK THIS ADMINISTRATION IS SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF DISABLED AMERICANS AND I FORESEE NO ATTEMPT TO RETREAT FROM THE COMMITMENT OF RECENT YEARS.
- HOWEVER, THERE WILL BE A GREATER RELIANCE UPON THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AS A PARTNER IN MEETING THE ECONOMIC NEEDS OF THE DISABLED. QUITE SIMPLY, BUSINESS WILL BE INVITED TO PICK UP SOME OF THE SLACK THAT GOVERNMENT ALONE CAN NO LONGER



- 4 -

HANDLE. THIS SEEMS TO ME A FAIR TRADE FOR THE LARGEST TAX CUT IN AMERICAN HISTORY, BUT, ALONG WITH THE REWARDS, SHOULD GO A SENSE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

- THERE IS ONE VERY IMPORTANT FEDERAL PROGRAM THAT I WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THOSE PRESENT HERE TODAY, BECAUSE IT IS ONE WHICH SYMBOLIZES THE ABILITY OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO WORK TOGETHER TO CHANNEL THE TALENTS AND ENERGIES OF OUR MOST UNDERUTILIZED RESOURCE -- 35 MILLION AMERICANS WHO ARE DISABLED. THE PROGRAM I AM REFERRING TO IS PROJECTS WITH INDUSTRY. THIS PROGRAM PROVIDES ENCOURAGING EVIDENCE THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS ANXIOUS TO MEET THEIR RESPONSIBILITY DURING THESE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES.
- PWI WORKS BECAUSE IT EMPHASIZES THE CAPABILITIES -- NOT THE DISABILITIES -- OF THE INDIVIDUALS IT EMPLOYS. IT WORKS BECAUSE IT ADVOCATES COMPETITION, AS WELL AS COMPASSION, AND INSTILLS INDEPENDENCE IN THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE. IT GIVES PEOPLE A REASON TO HOPE FOR A BETTER LIFE, WHILE GIVING THEM A PAYCHECK.

- 5 -

- BUDGETS IN WASHINGTON MAY FACE TRIMMING, BUT OUR COMMITMENT TO ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR THE DISABLED CAN NEVER BE CUT BACK, AND DURING THIS INTERNATIONAL YEAR, ALL NATIONS WILL JOIN IN AN EXPRESSION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO FURTHER PROMOTE THE NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED INDIVIDUALS WITHIN OUR RESPECTIVE SOCIETIES. THIS NATION HAS NO INTENTION OF COVERING THE DISABLED OVER IN A CLOAK OF FISCAL AUSTERITY -- RATHER IT SEEKS TO FIND BETTER WAYS TO TAP THEIR TALENTS AND ENERGIES FOR THE GOOD OF OUR ENTIRE SOCIETY. IN THIS ENDEAVOR, PRIVATE BUSINESSES AND CONCERNED INDIVIDUALS MUST BE WILLING TO ASSUME PARTNERSHIP STATUS WITH GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS -- NOT ONLY DOES ECONOMIC COMMON SENSE SUGGEST THIS BUT CONSCIENCE DEMANDS IT.
  
- THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR, LOCAL COMMUNITIES, GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESSES HAVE JOINED FORCES TO FOCUS ON THE PRIORITIES CONCERNING THE DISABLED WITHIN OUR SOCIETY. THE UNITED STATES COUNCIL ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE DISABLED HAS DONE AN OUTSTANDING JOB OF COORDINATING THESE EFFORTS, AND SPECIAL MENTION SHOULD ALSO BE MADE OF THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE THAT THE FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR HAS PLAYED IN COORDINATING EFFORTS WITHIN THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

- 6 -

- IT IS A PLEASURE FOR ME TO HAVE INTRODUCED A RESOLUTION (WHICH RECENTLY PASSED THE SENATE) DEALING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS, UNDERLINING THE COMMITMENT OF THE CONGRESS TO LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE LIVES OF DISABLED AMERICANS. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH ALL OF YOU HERE IN CONTINUING TO ACHIEVE NEW GOALS AND IMPROVE UPON OLD COMMITMENTS TO FURTHER ENRICH THE LIVES OF OUR NATION'S 35 MILLION DISABLED CITIZENS. LET US TOGETHER WORK TO FULFILL THE MEANING OF TENNYSON'S WORDS "TO STRIVE, TO SEEK, TO FIND AND NOT TO YIELD", IN OUR PROGRESS.