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I am grateful for the opportunity of discussing our mutual concern for a sound program for American citizens of Indian ancestry at this conference. The backdrop of our discussions is a national concern, and national action, on what John Kenneth Galbraith has called "insular poverty". Insular poverty, as distinguished from "case" poverty, is the poverty of an area or a region, of a community or of an Indian reservation. It has its roots in economic dislocations, changing technology, declining resources of water or soil, or geographic or cultural isolation.

Such poverty, "grinding, soul-shattering poverty" in Secretary Udall's words, is the overt symbol of the so-called Indian problem.

Such cancers can never stay isolated. Conditions on a single Indian reservation reflect, for good or ill, on all the Indian people, and on all the efforts of government directed to that segment of the population. And by government, I mean State and local as well as Federal.

The temptation to be superficial is great--Americans don't like to concede that their affluent society contains these pockets of poverty. So they retreat to the Biblical rationalization ("the poor ye have always with you") or to the vague charge of Federal responsibility (When is the Government going to cease forcing the Indians to stay on those miserable reservations?).

Misconceptions of the American Indian today are extremely widespread. At dozens of different kinds of meetings, the same questions are asked about our Indian programs: Can Indians vote? Are Indians permitted to leave the reservations? Are Indians entitled to go to public schools? When is the Government going to do something for the Indians?

Can it be that the American people, as preoccupied with civil rights as with any other public question, really believe that Indians don't have citizenship? That they are "wards" of the Government? That they are savages?

Unfortunately, it can be. Deep in our national psyche is hidden the reasons why Americans don't think of Indians as full-fledged citizens, albeit there is not the slightest hint of prejudice in their blindness about them. In no Federal program is there a greater public interest, and in no Federal program is there greater public ignorance.

In such an environment it is hard to formulate and carry out programs and policies. The present administration--and I'm proud to be a part of it and proud to speak up for it in the matter of Indian programs--started with an exceptional awareness of the needs in this area.

That the Indian people shall have a voice--which they shall be listened to with open mind as well as ear--and that something shall be done in response to their voiced needs--these are the principles upon which the Kennedy-Johnson Administration has for the past four years been guiding legislation and inaugurating programs for the Indian people.

President Kennedy understood--and President Johnson understands--the basic facts of our economic and

social life. This Administration that has not offered mere words and promises, but has produced laws and programs.

These efforts have been directed at all groups within our society; and some have been tailored particularly for groups with the most urgent and desperate needs. The Indian people have urgent needs and I should like to review the record of efforts in their behalf.

You may recall that, during his campaign four years ago, President Kennedy offered a 10 point program for improvement of conditions on Indian reservations. Let us take a look at the ten point program as it has shaped up: (1) we would, John F. Kennedy said, enact an area redevelopment measure to give Federal help for the development of industry and training of people in depressed areas. Federal help came with enactment of the law in 1962 and Indian reservations have been aided in developing industry and training workers.

(2) We would, the candidate said, provide adequate credit for Indians by expanding the loan fund, The Indian Revolving Loan Fund has been doubled--and, because credit pyramids, the presence of more Federal funds for business, industrial and land improvement investments has generated tribal and private investments to--the combined total now being $150 million.

(3) We would, Senator Kennedy promised, "help Indians retain their land by rendering credit assistance and by removing the elements of economic pressure and desperation that have caused them to sell their land." Stepped up programs in real estate appraisal, land management, forestry management, irrigation farming--all have helped the Indian people to hold their lands and make the lands work for them.

(4) We would, it was pledged, make the benefits of Federal housing programs available to Indians. We have done it. For the first time in history, Indian reservations began to participate in the Federal housing program, now, 63 reservations have housing authorities; 3,200 units were approved last year for reservations--almost ten percent of the national total; and 400 have actually been constructed, or under way.

(5) We would, President Kennedy further pledged, give young Indian people on opportunity to share in a youth training program. The youth conservation corps as it was originally conceived did not materialize--but camps for education and training are provided for in the new Economic Opportunity Act which President Johnson signed into law last month. There will be job corps camps all across the country, for young people who have not benefitted from schooling and who, as a consequence, are untrained and out of work. Some of these camps will be on Indian reservations.

(6) Support to vocational education was promised, support so necessary in this age of demand for skilled workers and a declining market for the unskilled. Not only has there been enacted a new Vocational Education Act to benefit public schools, but the Bureau of Indian Affairs has stepped up its own program of vocational training, in the two technical schools it operates - Haskell and the Institute of American Indian Arts. Moreover, a vocational training program for adults provides an opportunity for young men and women to acquire the many and sometimes highly specialized skills in which there are shortages of trained manpower. Thousands of Indian families - once living on the edge of chronic poverty - are now established in comfortable homes, their children well-fed and well-clothed because the head of the family is bringing home good wages every week.

(7) We would, it was promised, "develop a better health program for Indians." During the four years of the Kennedy-Johnson Administration the Indian health program has worked steadily to cure disease,

improve the environmental health, and increase hospital and medical services for the Indian people. Clean water, sewage disposal, control of disease-bearing insects, maternal and child care - 11 have resulted in market improvements in the health of the new generation of Indian children.

(8) We would work toward improvement of educational opportunities. School construction at a pace that is designed to make up for long years of neglect; new teachers; a variety of new vocational offerings; improved methods of teaching English to children who do not hear it spoken at home; financial aid for those who wish to go to college; basic education for adults; summer enrichment programs for children--all of these are in evidence, the results of four years of concentrated effort.

(9) Community development programs--the crux of any effort to help people improve themselves--were also pinpointed in President Kennedy's ten-point pledge, as he promised assistance to tribal leaders. New community buildings, improved community services by the tribal governments, carefully planned programs of economic development and education financed with tribal funds, a widespread and growing interest in encouraging the education of youth--all of these are evidences of community development on Indian reservations, in which specialized help from the Bureau of Indian Affairs has been provided. And now, with establishment of the Office of Economic Opportunity, much more can be looked for.

(10) Finally, we said we would emphasize genuinely cooperative relations between Federal officials and Indians." I sense, everywhere among Indian groups that I go, a new confidence in the Government and faith in themselves--and much of this new feeling can be attributed to the genuine concern and special efforts of Philleo Nash, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Philleo Nash has earned the sobriquet lithe Indians' Commissioner.

On an overall basis, in the past four years the Bureau of Indian Affairs has moved away from the purely custodial approach to its responsibilities and has begun to stress programs that help people to help themselves. Materially speaking, at least, there are some distinct evidences of success.

I have already mentioned the increase in loan funds for development purposes. Paralleling loans has been technical aid of various kinds. About 75 feasibility studies have been undertaken since 1962 to evaluate the potential of reservations for tourism, lumbering, recreational site development, and mineral resource development.

Several tourist recreation projects are now in operation--picnic areas, marinas, hunting preserves, the spectacular ski lift on the Mescalero Apache Reservation, and the already-famous new mineral springs resort at Warm Springs, Oregon.

Even beyond these tribal enterprises are the 40 or more industries that have encouraged and assisted in establishing themselves on or near reservations, providing new jobs for many Indians who never before knew what it meant to have a steady, year-round pay envelope. Jobs have also been created through construction of roads and from other projects financed with funds from the Accelerated 'Public Works Program.

A sound economy is the basis for a solid society--whether it be a reservation society or any other. The Bureau's effort to help the Indian people establish a sound economy--and, thereby, become participating citizens--is premised on the belief that the Indian people, as Oliver LaFarge once said, wish to become “whole people in our world without ceasing to be Indians."

It hardly needs stating for this audience that Indians are citizens of the United States, and of the State

Wherein they reside. That they register and vote has become a fact of political significance. They are not tied to their reservations in any way different from the way all of us are tied to our homes and the familiar places of our childhood and youth.

Furthermore, all of you understand that Indian reservations are not public lands, but private lands. Title held by the United States is a trust title, and the beneficial interest is either in the Indian tribes or in individual Indians. Insofar as “ending the reservation system” is concerned, no one could advocate a policy which would have the effect of depriving American citizens of private property.

What could be advocated, and frequently is advocated, is that the restrictions upon the alienation of Indian property be ended by ending the trust responsibilities of the United States.

Without meaning to criticize or to commend the action which is going on all the time in this direction--either at Congressional behest, or in the furtherance of existing authorities to terminate the trust relationship--let me discuss with you some of the implications of such a policy in terms of the State and the local units of government.

We can start by remembering that in legal theory at least, it is the umbilical cord of trust control over the land which justifies the existing Federal programs for Indians, not just ethnic differences. Ethnic difference is an offensive basis for governmental policy, and I for one hope we never base our Indian programs on that basis solely.

How many times have you, in your States, found yourself automatically assuming that any governmental service needed by Indians should be furnished by the Federal Government? Undeniably almost every kind of governmental service is furnished to Indians--education and health services to the tune of $140 millions of dollars a year each; welfare services and relocation and adult vocational training amounting to twenty-five million dollars a year; law enforcement costing nearly $3 million; forty million dollars’ worth of forestry, extension, soil and moisture, road and building and irrigation maintenance and more than $50 million dollars a year of construction, including schools, buildings and utilities, and irrigation systems.

What I would like the States to do is indulge in a little informal arithmetic. Would the nontaxable Indian lands yield as much money for the same services, if they were on the tax rolls? The question of course answers itself.

It answers itself in the same way that the equivalent question is beginning to answer itself in terms of the public lands. Recently in Utah, for example, I spoke to the Western Association of State Land Commissioners, and discussed the reinvestment by the Federal Government in the West under generous policies prescribed by Congress. On a per acre basis, Utah received, in fiscal 1963, 16 cents from lease of minerals on Federal lands; 38 cents "savings" on highway matching funds; 25 cents payment into the Reclamation Fund (whose benefits are by law confined to the Western States; and 12 cents program expenditures on Federal grazing lands. Ninety-two cents an acre is the equivalent of an assessed valuation of $18.50 per acre, on Utah's tax rates--and Utah taxes its own equivalent land at $2.50 per acre.

The amounts of the expenditures on the Indian programs are substantial in States like Arizona, for example. There, in this fiscal year, the Public Health Service will spend over $11 million. The Bureau of Indian Affairs will spend more than four times that amount--$20 million on education; $7 million on resource management; and half million on law enforcement; $12 million on utilities and other public

facilities and irrigation systems, and $6 million on Federal highways through reservations. What would the reservation land in Arizona have to be taxed at to yield this kind of money? More, I suspect, than equivalent private land is being taxed.

These moneys aren't begrudged. A generous Congress appropriates every dime of this money, and the test applied isn't the crass one of payment in lieu of taxes.

The point I hope I am making is that the Indian program, as so many programs of the Federal Government, represents an affirmative determination on the part of all the people of the United States to assume certain kinds of obligations as national obligations. The net effect in many situations, but particularly in the Western States, is a net benefit to the State or local governments which otherwise might be charged with furnishing such things as health or education, and a net benefit to the local economy, as in the case of the construction of irrigation' projects, and the carrying on of sound programs of forestry, agricultural extension, and soil and moisture work.

The old cry that the Federal Government should withdraw--that there should be less government--is a blind and shortsighted one in the West. It is strange that this is where most of it is heard.

The point has now been reached, I am convinced, at which further accomplishments, further planning, will depend very greatly upon increased coordination among local, State and Federal Governments--and upon more and more participation by the Indians themselves.

Concerning the participation of Indians in programs to aid them:

We are not far away from the time when giant steps can be taken, grand concepts put into action. I sometimes sense, however, that many of the Indian people themselves are unaware of how greatly their ultimate destinies rest with themselves. Government aid can build a floor of programs to alleviate poverty and the other human miseries that poverty engenders. Government aid can create an atmosphere in which the human will and spirit may thrive. But government aid cannot manufacture the special lens that people need to see opportunities that surround them. The people must develop enough faith in themselves to see themselves as creators as well as beneficiaries of their environment.

The Indian people contain within themselves the basic elements for their own resurgence as a self-supporting segment of our society. They are secure in the knowledge of who they are and what they need to retain their identity--and that is more than can be said of some of the rest of us. The Indians also have another advantage. They have an economic base on which to build. They own 50 million acres of land. True, some of it was worthless 50 years ago, but most of it is laden with potential for the years to come, in mineral reserves that might lie beneath the surface, and in leasing value that may derive from urbanization and reclamation, as the whole country melts slowly into a city.

The greatest of all opportunities for action by the people themselves comes by way of the new Economic Opportunity Act. This is the legislation that is premised on the assumption that people want to help themselves. Embodying the President's anti-poverty crusade, it provides funds and technical aid to the people in those communities who are ready with plans but lacking the means to undertake construction projects and education projects and other programs conceived from local need and nurtured by local hope.

“What the anti-poverty program should mean to Indians, I! Senator Humphrey, our Democratic candidate for Vice President says, “are increased opportunities for employment in Indian country; new

educational opportunities; better agricultural opportunities; better health; new industries and a happier and better life. The Democratic Party will not write off any reservation as hopeless.

The Indians are a proud and able people. They don't want handouts. They want, in their innermost hearts, to be in control of their own destinies. This hope can become reality both for the Indians who prefer to live on their reservations and for those who prefer to leave. In either case, the thing they need remember--or learn, if they have not yet learned it-is that poverty is not necessarily the price to pay for retaining their Indian identity. The whole American culture can be strengthened with fibers drawn from the Indian culture. The Indian life can also be strengthened by the addition of some of the good things that the modern world offers.

The great Chief Joseph, warrior and leader of a day long past, left a thought for all Indians of all times. He said:

“Let me be a free man--free to travel, free to stop; free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers; free to think, talk and act for myself--and I will obey every law or submit to the penalty. Whenever the white man treats the Indian as he treats his own kind, then we will have no more wars. We shall all be alike--brothers of one father and one mother, with one sky above us, and one country around us, and one government for all. For this day the Indian race is waiting and praying.

There is nothing I can add to those eloquent words, except to say that I believe the vision is at last within reach--if we stand as tall as we might.