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Raritan Valley Chamber of Commerce
March 15, 1972
Greenbrier Restaurant

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ... *file*

I AM VERY PLEASED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO
SPEAK TO THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE RARITAN VALLEY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BECAUSE WE SHARE A COMMON INTEREST,
THE GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY OF THE BUSINESS
AS WELL AS THE SOCIAL INTERESTS OF THE 25 MUNICIPALITIES
COMPRISING THE RARITAN VALLEY CHAMBER AREA.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, PHIL HOFMANN WAS SCHEDULED
TO BE YOUR SPEAKER THIS EVENING, BUT WAS REQUIRED TO PRESIDE
AT A SERIES OF MEETINGS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES THIS WEEK
AND LAST. TONIGHT HE IS IN CHICAGO. IT WAS AN UNAVOIDABLE
CONFLICT AND ONE OF THOSE SITUATIONS THAT THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER OF A COMPANY CANNOT CONTROL. I BRING TO YOU HIS
REGRETS AND APOLOGIES FOR HAVING TO MISS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO BE WITH HIS MANY FRIENDS IN THE NEW BRUNSWICK AREA.

I FEEL SOMEWHAT AT HOME THIS EVENING FOR SEVERAL REASONS... ONE IS THAT IN THE AUDIENCE THERE ARE WELL OVER 100 MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE JOHNSON & JOHNSON FAMILY OF COMPANIES WHO CAME OUT TO SUPPORT THE CHAMBER DINNER AND TO BACK ME UP IN CASE I GET IN TROUBLE WITH THE REST OF YOU. IT IS NICE TO HAVE FRIENDS AND I AM MOST APPRECIATIVE THAT THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO LISTEN TO ME SINCE MORE THAN A FEW GENTLEMEN IN THE AUDIENCE ARE COMPELLED TO HEAR ME OUT DURING THE DAY --- AND IT IS REALLY ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY TO VOLUNTEER TO COME OUT AND HEAR ME IN THE EVENING AS WELL.

THE SECOND REASON THAT I FEEL AT HOME IS THAT I GREW UP IN HIGHLAND PARK, GRADUATED FROM NEW BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL, WAS A STUDENT AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY AND HAVE SPENT VIRTUALLY ALL OF MY WORKING LIFE AT JOHNSON & JOHNSON AND ITS SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES. I KNOW THE NEW BRUNSWICK AREA, ITS ASSETS AS WELL AS ITS PROBLEMS, AND, LIKE YOU, I HAVE

A GREAT CONCERN FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD.

THERE IS AN INTERESTING AND RATHER DISTURBING PARADOX THAT EXISTS IN MIDDLESEX COUNTY AND THE AREA COMPRISING THE RARITAN VALLEY CHAMBER. WE KNOW FROM STATISTICS COMPILED BY THE INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION THAT MIDDLESEX COUNTY HAS BECOME THE LEADING INDUSTRIAL GAINER OF ALL OF NEW JERSEY'S 21 COUNTIES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, INCLUDING 1971. IN FORGING TO THE TOP MIDDLESEX HAS LED ITS NEAREST COMPETITOR, BERGEN COUNTY, TWO TO ONE IN INDUSTRIAL GROWTH.

THIS KIND OF GROWTH PERFORMANCE WOULD INDICATE A VERY ROSY FUTURE FOR ALL OF US. I AM NOT SO SURE, AND NEITHER IS ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS TAKEN THE TIME TO EXAMINE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. MIDDLESEX IS GROWING, BUT IT IS ALSO A COUNTY OVERWHELMED BY AN EXPANSION RATE WHICH THREATENS

FUTURE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY. IF THE PRESENT
TRENDS OF DEVELOPMENT CONTINUE DURING THE NEXT DECADE
AND BEYOND, MIDDLESEX WILL BE SEVERELY BURDENED WITH MANY
OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS NOW FACING OTHER METROPOLITAN
AREAS. I PUT THAT IN THE FUTURE KNOWING FULL WELL
THAT ALL OF US SEE AT THE PRESENT CLEAR INDICATIONS THAT THESE
PROBLEMS HAVE ALREADY GAINED A STRONG Foothold. I REFER TO:

- * SLUMS AND UNATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL AREAS;

- * EXTREME TRAFFIC CONGESTION;

- * AN ARCHAIC MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM;

- * INEVITABLE INTRUSION OF NOISE, POLLUTION

AND TRAFFIC INTO RESIDENTIAL AREAS;

- * INADEQUATE OPEN SPACE AND SPOILED NATURAL

RESOURCES; AND

- * PUBLIC HEALTH AND EDUCATION FACILITIES WHICH

WOULD NOT POSSIBLY BE ADEQUATE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY.

THESE OBSERVATIONS ARE SUPPORTED BY MANY OF THE BUSINESS LEADERS IN THIS AREA AND BACKED UP BY THE FACTS BROUGHT FORTH IN THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY INTERIM MASTER PLAN, AND THEREIN LIES THE PARADOX:

UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH, BUT LEADING TO WHAT?

IT IS MY HONEST OPINION THAT THE BUSINESSMEN REPRESENTED IN THIS ROOM WILL BE AMONG THOSE WHO WILL HELP DETERMINE THE ULTIMATE FATE OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA. IF WE CHOOSE TO LET NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE, IF WE REFUSE TO HELP GUIDE OUR OWN DESTINIES WITH REGARDS TO THIS GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, WE MOST SURELY RUN THE RISK OF BEING ENGULFED AND SWALLOWED UP BY IT. THE DIFFERENCE, OF COURSE, IS INDIVIDUAL CONCERN, PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT AND A WILLINGNESS TO TAKE OUR TURN AT THE TILLER. THERE IS NO QUESTION IN MY MIND THAT UNLESS A MAJORITY OF THE COMPANIES AND BUSINESSES -- LARGE AND SMALL -- AS WELL AS THE INDIVIDUALS

WHO RUN THEM ARE WILLING TO ASSUME A SHARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY, WE DEFINITELY RUN THE RISK OF GOING OFF COURSE.

IN NO WAY DO I WISH TO IMPLY THAT ALL OF THE PROBLEMS LIE IN NEW BRUNSWICK. THEY DO NOT. NOR DO I WISH TO STAND BEFORE YOU AND ASK ANY PREMATURE POST-MORTEMS ON A CITY THAT HAS ITS SHARE OF PROBLEMS. NEW BRUNSWICK IS FAR FROM DEAD, BUT IT IS BADLY IN NEED OF A TRANSFUSION TO ACHIEVE ITS FULL MEASURE OF VITALITY. INDEED, NEW BRUNSWICK IS THE HUB CITY AND IT IS THE VERY HEART AND CORE OF THE AREA WE ARE CONCERNED WITH. FROM A MEDICAL AS WELL AS AN ECONOMIC STANDPOINT, THE HEART MUST KEEP PUMPING IF THE REST OF THE BODY IS TO STAY ALIVE.

THERE ARE SOME IN THIS AUDIENCE WHO MIGHT BE PRONE TO WRITING OFF NEW BRUNSWICK AND LOOKING TO THE SUBURBAN AREAS TO LEAD THE WAY. I AM REMINDED OF SOME OBSERVATIONS MADE BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY WHEN HE WAS VICE PRESIDENT. HE PUT IT THIS WAY:

"WHAT HAPPENS IN AMERICA'S CITIES HAPPENS TO AMERICA.

"IT IS BY THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR CITIES THAT THE CHARACTER OF OUR CIVILIZATION WILL BE JUDGED.

"IT IS IN OUR CITIES THAT AMERICAN DEMOCRACY WILL EITHER SUCCEED OR FAIL.

"IT IS THERE THAT THE AMERICAN DREAM -- THE DREAM OF A FREE AND EQUAL PEOPLE, LIVING TOGETHER IN HARMONY -- WILL OR WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED."

THERE ARE STRONG SIGNS THAT IT CAN AND WILL BE POSSIBLE TO TURN NEW BRUNSWICK AROUND. JOHNSON & JOHNSON FOR ONE HAS DEVOTED ENORMOUS AMOUNTS OF MANPOWER AND RESOURCES TO NEW BRUNSWICK IN THE PAST AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO ALL IN OUR POWER TO REVITALIZE IT IN THE FUTURE; BUT THIS IS NOT A JOB FOR BIG BUSINESS ALONE, NOR CAN THE TASK BE UNDERTAKEN BY SMALL GROUPS OF CIVIC-MINDED INDIVIDUALS. IT MUST AND IT SHOULD BE A CONCERN OF ALL THE RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS OF ALL RACES AND ALL CREEDS AND ALL WALKS OF LIFE. IF THIS SOUNDS IDEALISTIC I MAKE NO APOLOGIES, BECAUSE I THINK WE ARE LIVING IN AN ERA OF OUR

SOCIETY WHEN THERE IS ROOM FOR IDEALISM TO REPLACE THE CHRONIC
NEGATIVE ATTITUDE THAT HAS DOMINATED SO MUCH OF OUR
THINKING IN RECENT YEARS.

THERE ARE SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS. IN 1971 ALONE \$14
MILLION WAS SPENT ON CONSTRUCTION WITHIN NEW BRUNSWICK,
AN INCREASE OF OVER 500 PERCENT OVER 1970. THE REVENUE
FROM INSPECTION FEES ALONE INCREASED 93 PERCENT.

MAYOR PATRICIA SHEEHAN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF
CITY GOVERNMENT ARE VALIANTLY ATTEMPTING TO GIVE THE
CITY THE LEADERSHIP NECESSARY TO TURN THE TIDE. THEY
WILL NEED HELP AND THEY MUST GET IT FROM PEOPLE LIKE YOU
AND ME.

THERE IS AN ALMOST DESPERATE NEED TODAY TO STIMULATE
FRESH THINKING AND TO GENERATE NEW PLANS. WE HAVE STRONG
AND SOMETIMES DISTRESSING TENDENCY TO THINK AND ACT IN
TRADITIONAL TERMS. WE PERSIST IN ISOLATED ACTIONS AND UNRELATED
ENDEAVORS. WE ARE JUST LEARNING THE REAL MEANING OF COMMUNITY
COOPERATION.

MORE RECENTLY LEADERS IN THE NEW BRUNSWICK AREA
HAVE CALLED FOR A COALITION OF EFFORT INVOLVING ALL SEGMENTS
OF THE COMMUNITY. IT IS A PROCESS OF BRINGING PEOPLE
TOGETHER RACIALLY, ECONOMICALLY, POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY.
INSTEAD OF A MULTITUDE OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS
EACH GOING THEIR OWN WAY WITH THEIR OWN PET PROJECTS,
THE COALITION OF EFFORT CAN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE A COMMON
PURPOSE. THIS MAKES IT MANDATORY FOR US TO THINK IN TERMS
OF A TOTAL COMMUNITY.

A COALITION OF EFFORT ON A COMMUNITY-WIDE OR
AREA-WIDE BASIS WOULD DEMAND THAT WE MORE PRECISELY ARTICULATE
AND DEFINE OUR GOALS. IT WOULD REQUIRE AN INVENTORY OF
OUR NUMEROUS PROGRAMS AND AN EVALUATION OF HOW
DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND EXPENDITURES MIGHT BE ELIMINATED.
I CAN ENVISION THE DAY WHEN WE ALSO MIGHT EXTEND THIS
COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO JOINT USE OF MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND
GROUP UTILIZATION OF OUR VARIOUS RESOURCES.

IT IS CLEAR IN MY MIND, HOWEVER, THAT NO GROUP EFFORT WILL WORK UNLESS THE INDIVIDUAL IS MOTIVATED TO PARTICIPATE. THERE IS STRONG INDICATION THAT RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS ARE NOT DOING THEIR SHARE, THOUGH I HASTEN TO ADD THAT MANY BUSINESSMEN AND COMMUNITY LEADERS ARE DOING MORE THAN THEIR SHARE.

LAST YEAR PHIL HOFMANN, SPEAKING TO THE COMBINED HOSPITALS IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION FUND FOR MIDDLESEX AND ST. PETER'S GENERAL HOSPITALS, STRENUOUSLY OBJECTED TO THE LACK OF A BROAD BASE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO THE JOINT HOSPITAL PROJECT. THIS I MIGHT ADD IS A PROGRAM THAT WILL PROVIDE THE NEW BRUNSWICK AREA WITH THE FINEST HOSPITAL SYSTEM IN NEW JERSEY.

HE CITED THE FACT THAT ONE COMPANY HAD CONTRIBUTED 56% OF THE TOTAL FUNDS FOR THE PROJECT AND WONDERED HOW A

COMMUNITY COULD PROGRESS WITHOUT A BROADER BASE OF
SUPPORT FOR ONE OF ITS PRIORITY PROGRAMS -- IMPROVED
HOSPITAL SERVICES.

I REGRET TO SAY THAT A YEAR LATER THE SAME QUESTION
CAN BE ASKED.

BILL RICHARDSON, YOUR CHAMBER PRESIDENT, WAS
PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN A LETTER APPEAL TO 140 BUSINESSES
IN THE AREA FOR SUPPORT OF THE ANNUAL MIDDLESEX HORSE
SHOW, WHICH, AS YOU KNOW, IS CONDUCTED FOR THE BENEFIT
OF ST. PETERS HOSPITAL.

UP UNTIL A FEW DAYS AGO ONLY TWO OF THE 140
COMPANIES SOLICITED HAD RESPONDED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO
UNDERSTAND THIS APATHY AND LACK OF INTEREST, AND YET WE
SEE IT REFLECTED IN MANY OTHER AREAS OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITY.

I NEVER ENJOYED BEING PREACHED TO, OR PLAYING THE
ROLE OF PREACHER, BUT I AM REALISTIC ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT
SOMEONE HAS TO STAND UP AND SAY: " WOULD YOU PLEASE ASK

YOURSELF IF YOU ARE MAKING AN HONEST EFFORT TO CONTRIBUTE
TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVIVAL OF THE AREA IN
WHICH WE WORK AND LIVE."

IN OUR COMPANY WE ENCOURAGE AND INSPIRE OUR
PEOPLE TO BE PARTICIPANTS RATHER THAN ONLOOKERS. IF
YOU ARE NOT ENCOURAGING YOUR ASSOCIATES TO DO THE SAME,
I DO NOT FEEL THAT YOU ARE FULFILLING ALL OF YOUR
MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

VERY OFTEN PEOPLE NEED JUST A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT
TO BECOME INVOLVED IN A CIVIC ACTIVITY, WHETHER IT BE
THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF A CHAMBER COMMITTEE, RUNNING FOR
A SEAT ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, BECOMING A BLOCK CAPTAIN
FOR THE UNITED COMMUNITY SERVICES, OR, IF YOU ARE A HOMEMAKER,
CONTRIBUTING SOME OF YOUR TIME TO A WORTHWHILE PROJECT.
THERE ARE CHILDREN WHO NEED TO BE TAUGHT AND CARED FOR WHILE
BOTH PARENTS WORK BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC NECESSITY. THERE ARE

RACIAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED. EVEN A LIMITED AMOUNT OF YOUR TIME WILL HASTEN THE SOLUTIONS THAT WE ALL SEEK.

FOR MANY OF US, THIS WILL REQUIRE EXTENDING OURSELVES AND REACHING FOR GOALS THAT ARE WORTHY OF OUR BEST EFFORTS. THE EVENTS OF THE PAST DECADE IN THIS COUNTRY HAVE SHOCKED MANY OF US. WE WERE NAIVE ENOUGH TO THINK THAT IT COULDN'T HAPPEN IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND YET A PANORAMA OF UNREST, CRISIS, HATE AND VIOLENCE PASSED BEFORE OUR EYES WITH GREAT RAPIDITY. I PERSONALLY FEEL THAT MANY OF THESE TORTUROUS DAYS COULD HAVE BEEN LESS PAINFUL IF WE HAD BEEN MORE INVOLVED AS INDIVIDUALS IN WORKING OUT SOLUTIONS TO OUR PROBLEMS.

BUT THAT IS THE PAST AND I, LIKE YOU, AM MORE CONCERNED ABOUT TOMORROW. MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, IS BUT ONE SMALL SPECK ON THE MAP OF THESE GREAT UNITED STATES - BUT TO

US IT LOOMS MUCH LARGER BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE WE RAISE

OUR CHILDREN, HAVE OUR HOMES AND CONDUCT OUR BUSINESS.

IF WE ARE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS IN OUR IMMEDIATE

ENVIRONS THEN WE ARE MISSING ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT

FACTORS THAT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT TODAY'S SOCIAL TURMOIL. WE

ARE MISSING THE POINT THAT WHAT OCCURS HERE IN OUR OWN

AREA IS MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS OF TIMES AND MAKES UP THE

WHOLE PICTURE OF WHAT IS OCCURRING THROUGHOUT OUR NATION.

IF WE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE OUR PROBLEMS ON THE LOCAL

LEVEL AND IMPROVE OUR ENVIRONMENT THEN THERE IS LITTLE HOPE

THAT THE CHANGE WE SO DESPERATELY SEEK WILL COME ABOUT AT ALL.

SO OFTEN WE LOOK AT THE BIG PROBLEM AND IT SEEMS

OVERPOWERING AND WE ASK OURSELVES, WHAT CAN I AS ONE

INDIVIDUAL DO AGAINST SUCH INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS. THE FACT

IS THAT ALL SOLUTIONS TO ALL PROBLEMS MUST BEGIN WITH THE INDIVIDUAL

AND HIS OR HER DETERMINATION TO FIND A BETTER WAY.

IN YOUR BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS, IN THE COMMUNITIES
IN WHICH YOU LIVE, IN YOUR CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND IN
YOUR CHURCHES THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO BE OF
SERVICE TO YOUR FELLOW MAN AND INDEED TO YOURSELF.
PERHAPS IT IS TIME FOR US TO REDEFINE GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

IF WE ATTEMPT THIS PERSONAL CHALLENGE, I
AM CONVINCED THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE
CHALLENGES OF INDUSTRIAL AND BUSINESS GROWTH IN THE
RARITAN VALLEY AREA AND AT THE SAME TIME PLAN A WAY OF
LIFE THAT WILL MAKE ALL OF THIS PROGRESS SEEM WORTHWHILE.

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THERE ARE SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS. AT THIS VERY MOMENT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MAJOR PROJECTS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF "NEAR ACTION", PROJECTS AWAITING EITHER FURTHER STUDY OR DECISIONS TO STOP OR GO AHEAD. I'M REFERRING TO THE SPORTS COMPLEX, HALL OF FAME, ROUTE 18, THE NEW BRUNSWICK RAILROAD STATION, AND URBAN RENEWAL PROPOSALS. THEY ARE ALL PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. WHATEVER THEIR MERITS, AND WHEREVER THEIR LOCATION, WE STILL MUST REGARD THEM AS SIGNS OF POTENTIAL GROWTH AND VITALITY.

IT IS NOT A TIME FOR DISCOURAGEMENT WHEN WE FIND PROPOSALS OF THIS MAGNITUDE BEFORE US. WHERE I DO BELIEVE WE ARE MAKING A MISTAKE IS OUR INCLINATION TO LOOK AT THESE PROJECTS INDIVIDUALLY, ONE BY ONE, RATHER THAN AS A PACKAGE. THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE FUTURE OF THE COMMUNITY AND SURROUNDING AREAS WILL REPRESENT A COMBINATION OF FACTORS.

ALSO, I WOULD POINT OUT THAT IN 1971 ALONE \$14 MILLION WAS SPENT ON CONSTRUCTION WITHIN NEW BRUNSWICK,