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FOR RELEASE AFTER DELIVERY
Wednesday, April 26, 1967

REMARKS BY
HONORABLE FARRIS BRYANT
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PLANNING
AT THE
MICHIGAN GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE
ON FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS
LANSING, MICHIGAN
APRIL 26, 1967

I'm happy to be in Michigan. It is fitting that we hold this meeting on Federal-State Relations in Lansing. If any state represents the economic sinews of America it is Michigan. If any state was responsible for pioneering our modern industrial techniques, it is Michigan.

And your distinguished Governor, George Romney, has, in word and deed, been in the forefront of those Governors who have advanced the cause of improved Federal-State relations.

That is precisely why we are here today. We want to streamline and simplify our Federal-State relationships. We look toward a structure as modern as our age and problems demand, yet as sound as the vision of Federalism conceived by our forefathers and tempered to each new challenge which has faced our Nation over 190 years.

Certainly Governor George Romney is eminently equipped to help us in this task which could well be our overriding problem in this last third of the twentieth century. He has served as Vice Chairman and then Chairman of the Midwestern Governors' Conference. He has been a member of the Executive Committee of the National Governors' Conference. Last year he headed a Special Study Committee on Revenue Sources of State and Local Governments. And in 1961 he was Vice President of the State of Michigan Constitutional Convention. So Governor Romney knows State problems from many vantage points. He has invited us here today so that we might together build a closer and more effective Federal-State relationship.

The problems themselves are dramatically demonstrated in the statistics of those relations. More than 400 authorities exist for grant programs. At least 160 have been added since 1960. More than 1,000 new Federal development districts, areas and regions have been funded. Last December, one of our Governors reported to the Governors' Conference that "there are 170 separate Federal aid programs being administered by 21 separate Federal departments and agencies making grants to more than 200 agencies and subdivisions" in his State alone.

Here in Michigan, a highly industrialized State, Governor Romney and his administrative family must live and work with about 160 separate Federal grant programs providing more than 425 million dollars, and affecting every city and county in the State.

Still, there is a serious question of centralization which could weaken our Federal system if the States do not exercise affirmative and aggressive initiatives in the management of these funds on the State level. Let me make abundantly clear my conviction that the State must continue to play a vigorous and vital role in our Federal system. It cannot forfeit that responsibility despite the increase in Federal grants.

The fact is that State and local expenditures in these areas currently exceed \$75 billion each year, five times the amount contributed by the Federal Government. And those State and local expenditures are expected to reach \$142 billion by 1975.

Clearly, it is the States playing their traditional role in the partnership which will determine the success of these efforts. There are two separate problems.

One -- the obvious problem -- is budgetary.

The other -- less obvious, and more important and difficult -- is the administrative problem.

Neither of these problems is "political," for they are common for Republicans and Democrats.

Neither of these problems is "deliberate," for they are the unintended results of many separate actions by the Congress in the pursuit of diverse but good goals.

Neither of these problems finds a natural or obvious solution within the framework of our established institutions and practices.

One thing is clear! If we are to find a solution, a methodology must be formulated to insure the coordination of diverse claims, programs and administration with related activities, shared concerns and similar responsibilities within the State. It follows "as the night the day" that this cannot be done except through the office and person of the Governor.

Essential to their solutions is adequate "communications." The President, in addressing the Federal Department Heads on November 11, 1966 and in his State of the Union Message January 10, placed great emphasis upon that idea. He said, in part:

"The 88th and 89th Congresses enacted more social and economic legislation than any two Congresses in our history. But all of this legislation will come to nothing unless it reaches the people.

"Federal energy is essential. But it is not enough. Only a total working partnership among Federal, State and local governments can succeed. The test of that partnership will be the concern of each public organization, each private institution, and each responsible citizen. . ."

"We intend to work with the States and localities to do exactly that. "

And several months ago, President Johnson reaffirmed these sentiments in his Budget Message to the Congress. He said, in part:

"Our agenda must give high priority to a stronger and more effective federal system of government in the United States. To meet urgent and growing needs, the Federal Government is providing a wide range of programs to assist State and local governments. Now the chief task is to manage these programs efficiently at every level of government to assure the most effective public services. . ."

"Another aspect of the problem of intergovernmental cooperation has been the process of consultation with elected officials of State and local governments on matters concerning the development and administration of Federal assistance programs. Governors and local chief executives are responsible for the management of their units of government. The Federal Government should take all practical steps to increase the role of these executives in the administration of federally aided programs. . ."

We are here today to implement those ideas. Our objectives are simple:

1. To establish adequate communications. We want to be sure that we are all on the same frequency, that our earphones are plugged in, and that everyone who should be heard has a working microphone.
2. To ensure coordination in process and purpose. That means putting the Governor in the co-pilot's seat.

While the President and the Governors are setting our course, the rest of us can keep the ashtrays clean, and tigers in our tanks.

We have with us today a distinguished group of Federal officials. They know their jobs. We hope this meeting, and the fallout from it, will enable them to achieve a broader understanding of State problems than can be secured from dealing exclusively with their special areas of concern.

I recognize the competence of Governor Romney's staff. With such a leader, it could not be otherwise. We hope that they will acquire a better insight into the underlying reasons for Federal procedures.

If this chemistry works, we will develop administrative initiatives that will make possible the coordination we all seek.

This is not our first effort in the field of Federal-State relations.

We have over the past year:

1. Held a State Legislative Leaders' Conference in Washington -- the first of its kind in history.
2. Arranged for President Johnson to meet with the Executive and Highway Safety Committees of the Governors' Conference and with Federal Officials to discuss traffic safety. The suggestions made by the Governors in these sessions were incorporated in the final legislation.
3. Through Regional Offices of the Office of Emergency Planning we have maintained a two-way dialogue with the States. OEP administers for the President, funds made available to the States in times of natural disaster and coordinates the activities of the entire Federal establishment when major disasters are declared.
4. The Office of Emergency Planning has several other activities which impact upon the Federal-State relationship. In the telecommunications field we are moving forward with planning to improve communications systems among the various levels of Government. Since law enforcement, education, water development, transportation and air pollution are not bound by geographical areas an assault on the problems requires the most efficient and swiftest communications facilities. In another OEP area, we are using our computer facilities and expertise to develop a Data Comparability Study of direct interest to the States. In effect, this study looks to the simplification of standards and nomenclatures used by the fifty States.

In countless instances, these definitions are different and not translatable unless the criteria are thoroughly understood and programmed. We do not want uniform measuring rods, but it would be extremely useful to know how one State's measurement can be expressed in terms of measurements used by other States. This is particularly important as we move increasingly into regional compacts.

5. Finally, I have been privileged to represent the President at the National Governors' Conference and at various regional conferences. These meetings, coupled with a steady correspondence between my office and the Governors, have helped to establish and maintain the line of communication which is the purpose of this Conference.

I would end on this note. There was a time when Americans enjoyed parallel citizenship under governments which served different levels of need -- Federal and State. Today we have parallel citizenship under governments serving in the same areas of need. Federal grants have risen from \$30 million annually in 1920 to nearly \$15 billion today. If we are to use these funds wisely and well, if we are to develop programs most responsive to the needs of the people, if we are to keep pace with an era of enormous change, we must innovate and create the institutional means to master our age in freedom. In the final analysis, success will depend on the States and the competence shown by them, as it always has.

We are here today in Michigan to begin that process.