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SPEECH FOR YOUTH SUMMIT

Dear Boys and ~~Girls~~: You are the most lucky boys ~~and girls~~ in all the world, to be born in the greatest country in all the world and to have the best opportunity for a free education than anywhere else in the whole world. I hope you are taking good care of yourselves. By that I mean physically as well as mentally. You are at a period in your life that you can make a determination of what kind of a life you will have from now until the time you die. You can either have a worthwhile life life so that when you get to the end you can say I did the best that I could with what God gave me, or you can say God gave me a body, and a brain in that body, and I squandered both. I didn't take care of my body: I fed it poorly, gave it drugs to take, cigarettes to smoke and I didn't exercise. I didn't bother to learn I only played and had a good time. I produced nothing, did nothing for others than myself. I wish I had a chance to do it all over again. Well, we only have the one chance and it is yours to seize. Treat your body as if it were a Temple and cultivate your mind as if you were an Einstein.

Because you live in a great country it is your duty to do everything you can to keep it great. Now it is in trouble and it needs the help of its boys and girls. It

needs your understanding. To have a country that is a Democracy means, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country of the people by the people and for the people. It means that we, the people, are the ones who decide who are leaders should be. It means we choose to elect a president, for instance, who has a fine past record, who has good ideas, who has good moral fiber, who loves people and who has vision.

Today we have allowed ourselves to accept the man who can raise the most money as the smartest and brightest and the most qualified to be our president. This is a false idea and one that must be unacceptable.

We have laws that are supposed to determine how we run our government and those laws are being broken. In 1097 when Theodore Roosevelt was the president it became obvious to him that big money interests were taking over the government and controlling the elections by furnishing money to candidates of their choice rather than the choice of the people. The law he passed said that there was to be no corporate money in politics. A similar law was passed against Unions some years later. Those two laws are still on the books. And they are being broken by both Democratic and Republican parties. It has become the most serious problem we are facing in America today.

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Bth parties brag about how much money theeir candidate has been able to raise, as if instead of vision and ability to solve problems as a great leader must do, they have established a criteria that the man who raises the most money is the smartest. What a dumb idea! Do they think we are all fools? Do they think we cannot see that the candidates are being bought? Do they think we do not realize that we have lost our representatives to big money interests? To the rich? Do they think we do not realize we no longer have access to our representatives that we are shut out by their big money? That we are being taxed without representation?

It is time for we the people to rise up and say NO MORE . (Soft money, illegal money must go.) We must vote not for someone who has been bought, but for someone that appeals to your heart. Someone that does not talk with forked tongue! ^{not} Someone who promises you the moon before he is elected and forgets what he has promised once he is elected.

[Some people say they will not vote because there is no one to vote for. If they voted for some one they like that person could not get elected and they would be wasting their vote. I say the only wasted vote is one not cast. You must vote your heart and let the chips

fall where they may. You must vote for the long term, not for the candidate of the day, if he does not speak to your heart. If you vote for the candidate of your heart and he does not win, remember, you are voting for the future, for the long term. Because if you vote and many others vote with you your man 's ideas will become known and he will ultimately win in the end.

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Meanwhile you can work very hard to get public financing for your state and your country. Right now we have four states that are on public financing: Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont and Arizona. There are two more working very hard to get it passed in November, Missouri and Oregon. Other states are working on it for the future. And here is where you boys and girls can help. Our own state of N.H. has passed a law in the Senate, which was defeated in the House. The House needs to be educated. You boys and girls could help the Citizen's Alliance in this work. And I hope you will contact them here in Concord at 225-2097. They are ready to give you tasks that will be of great help to them.

Money that could be used to help the poor, the environment, the voting ^{rights} ~~rites~~, health insurance and many organizations that are in place in this country ready to work is being used for candidates campaigns

for subsidies to corporations, ^{but} ~~and~~ when public financing has been adopted there will be money free to do many good things. When you go to bed at night, say to yourself one out of every five children in this country is going to bed hungry tonight. Two out of every black children are going to bed hungry tonight. Ask yourself: What can I do to help? How can I change what is going on in this country? This rich prosperous country that has made so many people rich, but in the process has left so many behind.

I walked with Dick Gregory, the black stand-up comic in Memphis, Tennessee, on a ceremonial walk to commemorate the march of the Sanitary Workers who made that march and which in the end was where Dr. King gave his life. I asked him if it was possible to interest his people in working for campaign finance reports. He said to me, "My people are worried about the rats in the bedroom eating on their children and the cockroaches in their kitchens." I said, in horror, "Mr. Gregory that was in the past." And he said to me, "No, Madam, that is ~~now~~ now. It is true that some people have become very rich in this country and because the stock market is higher than it has ever been, we are all rich, but there are many that have been left behind"

And when he said that, I remembered that when I was walking in Parker, Arizona, I was told by a woman I talked with on the road, that there was a trailer behind the Main street in Parker, without running water or toilet facilities, and a widow with seven children ^{was} ~~were~~ living there. When I met the mayor of Parker I asked her if this were true and she was horrified and said she would look into it that very day. She said, "Some people are too proud to admit they need help, but I will see that she gets it, I promise you, grannyd." And I believed her.

So what can you do to help, besides loving yourself and making sure that you are taking care of that wonderful machine that is your body that the Almighty has given you> Beside becoming aware of what is going on around you and in the world? I charge you that it is your duty besides eating right and exercising your body, exercise your brain. Develop it. Read a daily paper and know what is going on in the world. Skip the crime, the horror and the scandal, but read the front page headlines and then go to the editorial page and see what the editor of the paper is saying, and the people that are writing letters on the same page and the next page called the OpEd page to see how the people that are supposed to know how to cure things are giving their advice.

I don't have to tell you ^{young} your people here today to join an organization, because that is why you are here. I think you are very lucky boys and girls to have an organization that is learning and working on the problems of our nation. I congratulate you all. It gives me great hope for the future to see young people who care enough about their country to spend time on the most important problem our country is facing today.

(And you can do something about it collectively.) When I discovered that just paying my taxes and making sure I voted was not all that I needed to do to be a good citizen I was shocked. I have to admit I had never thought beyond that. But when I found that a poor man today had to sell his soul, his votes, in order to run for the house or the senate, or he had to be a multimillionaire I thought to myself, I do not want my ~~16~~ 12 great grandchildren to be brought up in a country that is no longer a democracy. What can I do? How can an old woman of 90 years of age ready to go to her maker any minute, an old woman living on Social Security and a wee pension, living under poverty level do to keep our democracy from slip sliding slip sliding any further? Well, the only thing I had in my favor was too good legs, and a body that I had taken care of. So I thought. I can walk. That would be dramatic if I

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walked.

I would walk across the country trying to create a wave of interest in Campaign Finance Reform. To get the illegal money out of politics. I would be like Paul Revere and try to wake up the sleeping giant of America.

And you know what? I found it wasn't true what the Senate and the Media were saying. That the reason only 50% of our people were ~~not~~ voting because they were apathetic, didn't care, were lazy, only thought of themselves! I found that people love their country, this beautiful country, but they felt they no longer had a voice, that it didn't matter whether they voted or not, that politicians were all crooks and until there was some one to vote for that they could admire and respect and believe in, they just were not going to vote at all. Because it would just be a wasted vote. I told them, as I am telling you, the only wasted vote is the one not cast. Vote your heart and let the chips fall where they may. But vote honestly and you may have changed the country back to a democracy and a government of and by and for the people.