

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON
EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

CHAIRMAN JUSTIN DART

Remark by Justin Dart, Chairman, the United States President's
Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, International
Conference on Equality of People With Disabilities, Dusseldorf,
Germany, May 4, 1992.

ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT BUSH I CONGRATULATE ERNST-DIETER
BERTHOLD, PETER FLOERECHE, WOLFGANG TIGGES AND ALL WHO
HAVE WORKED TO CREATE THIS MAGNIFICENT GATHERING TO
PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS. WHAT A PRIVILEGE IT IS TO BE HERE
TODAY IN THE COMPANY OF GREAT CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE LIKE
COLIN BARNES, HORST FREHE, ANNE MALLOY, PHILIPPE SAINT
MARTIN, PAULINE VERSTEEGH, HEINZ PREIS, ADOLF RATZKA AND
SO MANY OTHER PIONEERS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY
COMMUNITY TO UNITE ALL OF ITS PEOPLE AND PASSION IN
WORLD WIDE REVOLUTION FOR EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT.

LET EVERY NATION MANDATE BY LAW AND IMPLEMENT THE
FULL EQUALITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - NOW.

LET EVERY NATION INVEST ALL OF ITS HUMAN AND ECONOMIC
CAPITAL DIRECTLY IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL OF ITS PEOPLE
TO PRODUCE LIVES OF QUALITY - NOW.

WE HAVE MADE A GOOD START. THANKS TO YOU, AND TO ALL OF
OUR COLLEAGUES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, THERE HAS BEEN
A MIRACLE OF PROGRESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES DURING
THIS CENTURY. YOU IN GERMANY AND OTHER EUROPEAN
NATIONS HAVE PROVIDED PIONEERING LEADERSHIP.

THERE ARE FIVE DECADES OF SOLID EVIDENCE PROVING
ABSOLUTELY THAT PEOPLE WITH EVERY TYPE OF DISABILITY
CAN BE PRODUCTIVE CONTRIBUTORS AS WORKERS AND AS
LEADERS IN EVERY AREA OF HUMAN ENDEAVOR.

BUT COLLEAGUES YOUR PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS HAVE NOT

BEEN IMPLEMENTED ON A SOCIETY WIDE BASIS. THE EMPLOYMENT RATE AMONG AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES IS 33%.

IN MOST NATIONS THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IS NOT EMPLOYMENT, BUT RATHER BASIC SUBSISTENCE. MORE THAN HALF OF A BILLION PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CONTINUE TO FORM OUR PLANET'S LARGEST, MOST ISOLATED, MOST IMPOVERISHED, MOST OPPRESSED MINORITY. THE RECENT UNITED NATIONS REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DISABILITY OUTLINES DEVASTATING VIOLATIONS OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS.

THE HARD REALITY IS THIS. SOCIETY IN EVERY NATION IS STILL INFECTED BY THE ANCIENT ASSUMPTION THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE LESS THAN FULLY HUMAN, AND THEREFORE ARE NOT FULLY ELIGIBLE FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO OTHER PEOPLE AS A MATTER OF RIGHT.

MANY YEARS AGO IT BECAME CLEAR TO AMERICAN DISABILITY RIGHTS ADVOCATES THAT WE WOULD NEVER PARTICIPATE IN THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY UNTIL OUR NATION ENACTED A HIGHLY VISIBLE, COMPREHENSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS LAW.

WE STRUGGLED FOR A DECADE TO ACHIEVE THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA). ADA IS THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE CIVIL RIGHTS LAW FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES BY ANY NATION. IT OPENS THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY TO FULL EQUALITY AND FULL PROSPERITY. BUT ADA IS NOT EQUALITY. IT IS NOT PROSPERITY. ADA IS A PROMISE TO BE KEPT.

THERE WILL BE MANY MORE YEARS OF STRUGGLE TO WIN THE BATTLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN MAINSTREET AMERICA.

FIGHTING AND WINNING THAT BATTLE FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, BUT IT IS ONLY BE THE BEGINNING. BECAUSE UNLESS WE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES ARE SATISFIED WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO BE DEPENDENT AND POOR, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO JOIN OUR NON-DISABLED FELLOW CITIZENS IN FACING ANOTHER HARD REALITY.

THE STUBBORN PROBLEMS OF MOST NATIONS IN 1992: UNEMPLOYMENT, WELFARE, POVERTY, ENVIRONMENTAL

DAMAGE, INCREASING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEFICITS - THE CURRENT WORLD-WIDE RECESSION - ARE NOT THE RESULT OF NORMAL DEVELOPMENT AND MINOR MALADJUSTMENTS OF BASICALLY SOUND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MACHINES.

DAZZLED BY THE SUCCESS OF MODERN INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY, WE HUMANS HAVE COME TO REGARD SOCIETY AS A MAGICAL SOURCE OF THE GOOD LIFE WITHOUT MUCH EFFORT ON OUR PART.

WE HAVE ALLOWED OUR INSTITUTIONS TO BECOME PATERNALISTIC AND OBSOLETE. WE HAVE SQUANDERED OUR ABUNDANCE ON ARCHAIC SYSTEMS AND SELF-INDULGENT CONSUMPTION.

OUR MOST SERIOUS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS - IN BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND DEVELOPING NATIONS - RESULT DIRECTLY FROM OUR FAILURE TO INVEST THE FULL RESOURCES OF SCIENCE AND DEMOCRACY IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF EACH HUMAN INDIVIDUAL TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF BECOMING PRODUCTIVE IN A SOCIETY OF EXPLOSIVE CHANGE, COMPLEXITY AND OPPORTUNITY.

AND SO WE SEE INCREASING ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN ALL NATIONS. WE SEE OUR BASIC INSTITUTIONS, GOVERNMENT, FINANCE, COMMERCE, SOCIAL SERVICES, COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS INCREASINGLY UNABLE TO MEET THE CHALLENGES WHICH PROGRESS HAS PRESENTED TO US. WE SEE AN INCREASING GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR. WE SEE INCREASING MILLIONS OF INDIVIDUALS FALLING INTO AN EXISTENCE OF FEAR, FRUSTRATION, HOPELESSNESS, POVERTY AND DEPENDENCY. WE SEE A TRAGIC FAILURE OF LIFE QUALITY POTENTIAL FOR ALL HUMANS, DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED, POOR AND RICH.

SOLUTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND FOR ALL PEOPLE ARE GOING TO REQUIRE REFOCUSING THE FOUNDATIONAL PROCESSES OF OUR CULTURE TO ESTABLISH AS THEIR CLEARLY IDENTIFIED CENTRAL THRUST A CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT, A POLICY OF EMPOWERMENT AND A SCIENCE OF EMPOWERMENT

CONCEPT. THE BUSINESS OF SOCIETY IS EMPOWERMENT. THE

LEGITIMATE PURPOSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, OF HUMAN SOCIETY AND ITS GOVERNMENTS, IS NOT SIMPLY TO GUARANTEE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE THE GOOD LIFE. THE PURPOSE, THE, ABSOLUTE RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIETY IS TO EMPOWER ALL OF ITS MEMBERS ACTUALLY TO PRODUCE AND TO LIVE THE GOOD **LIFE**.

EFFECTIVE INVESTMENTS IN EMPOWERMENT MUST BE THE CLEARLY FOCUSED GOAL AND FINAL MEASUREMENT OF ALL HUMAN ACTIVITIES. INVESTMENTS IN SPECULATIVE REAL ESTATE, CIGARETTES AND WEAPONS ARE NOT OF THE SAME VALUE AS INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND TECHNOLOGY THAT EMPOWERS.

CONCEPT: HAVING A DISABILITY IS NORMAL. WITH THE ADVANCE OF MODERN MEDICINE AND TECHNOLOGY, DISABILITY HAS BECOME A NORMAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE HUMAN PROCESS. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT BY THE YEAR 2,000 ONE OUT OF FIVE AMERICANS WILL HAVE A DISABILITY. THAT PROPORTION WILL RISE THROUGHOUT THE 21ST CENTURY. DISABILITY IS NOT A MATTER OF "THEM AND US." IT IS JUST US.

AS PEOPLE WITHIN THE NORMAL ~PECTRUX OF HUMAN DIFFERENCES, WE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES HAVE THE SAME UNALIENABLE RIGHTS AND THE SAME UNALIENABLE RESPONSIBILITIES AS OTHER PEOPLE.

A RATIONAL SOCIETY WILL CREATE PROCESSES WHICH EMPOWER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES JUST AS NORMALLY AS PEOPLE WHO ARE SHORT, TALL, BLACK, BLOND, CHARMING, BORING OR WHO CATCH THE FLU. IN A RATIONAL SOCIETY ~HERE WILL BE NO DISTINCT DISABILITY POLICY, ONLY PUBLIC POLICY WHICH EMPOWERS ALL PEOPLE.

EMPOWERMENT IS NOT A POLICY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, IT IS A POLICY FOR ALL PEOPLE. BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER WAY THAT 21ST CENTURY HUMAN BEINGS CAN EMPOWER THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES TO LIVE THE GOOD LIFE.

EMPOWERMENT, WHAT IS IT? CONSERVATISM? LIBERALISM? SOCIALISM? EMPOWERMENT IS THE SELF-EVIDENT GOAL OF ALL THOSE HONORABLE METHODS. IT IS THE ESSENCE OF DEMOCRACY. IT TRANSCENDS LIMITS WHICH HAVE BECOME

OBVIOUS AND ARGUMENTS WHICH HAVE BECOME EMOTIONAL BARRIERS. IT PROVIDES A UNIFYING FOCUS FOR COMPLEMENTARY ACTION BY THE PROPONENTS OF DISABILITY RIGHTS AND FREE ENTERPRISE, OF BUSINESS AND LABOR, OF CONSERVATISM, LIBERALISM AND SOCIALISM.

EMPOWERMENT IS WHEN WE SAY NO TO THE BIG LIE THAT SOCIETY, GOVERNMENT, THE FREE MARKET AND THE PUBLIC MEDIA ARE SOME SORT OF PATERNALISTI, SUPERGODS THAT CAN TAKE CARE OF US, THAT CAN GIVE US TRUTH, EQUALITY, AND PROSPERITY.

EMPOWERMENT IS WHEN WE WHO HAVE DISABILITIES, AND ALL PEOPLE, REJECT STEREOTYPED ROLES OF HELPLESSNESS, SPECTATORISM, DEPENDENCY AND COMPULSIVE CONSUMPTION, AND TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERN OURSELVES AND OUR NATIONS, AND TO INVEST ALL OF OUR ABILITIES AND RESOURCES IN LIVES OF QUALITY FOR OURSELVES, OUR FAMILIES, AND OUR COMMUNITIES.

EMPOWERMENT IS WHEN THE REHABILITATION COUNSELOR, THE TEACHER, THE EMPLOYER, THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL IS AT ONCE A SERVANT, AN ADVOCATE, AN ATTORNEY, A COACH WORKING; IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL TO ENABLE THAT INDIVIDUAL TO ACHIEVE FULL PERSONAL POTENTIAL AND FULL PARTICIPATORY CONTROL OF SELF AND SOCIETY.

COLLEAGUES, THE PROMISE OF SCIENCE AND DEMOCRACY WILL NOT BE KEPT UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE RESPONSIBLE LEADERS ARE ALL OF US, THAT "THE DISABLED" CAN BE ANY OF US, AND THAT THE PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE SINGLE MOTHER IN THE GHETTO, THE PERSON WITH MENTAL ILLNESS, MENTAL RETARDATION, BLINDNESS OR DEAFNESS IS JUST AS IMPORTANT TO OUR POCKET BOOKS AND TO OUR HAPPINESS AS THE PRODUCTIVITY OF THE PRESIDENT OF COCA COLA AND THE STAR OF WORLD CUP SOCCER.

FROM CONCEPT TO ACTION. TWO POINTS.

FIRST: HUMAN RIGHTS. EVERY NATION SHOULD ENACT A LAW WHICH, TAKEN IN COMBINATION WITH ALREADY EXISTING LEGISLATION, CONSTITUTES A HIGHLY VISIBLE, ENFORCEABLE

MANDATE THAT ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MUST HAVE FULLY EQUAL ACCESS TO EVERY SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL PROCESS.

PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION MUST BE EXTENDED TO ALL PEOPLE WHO HAVE, OR WHO ARE REGARDED AS HAVING, A MENTAL OR PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT WHICH SUBSTANTIALLY LIMITS ONE OR MORE MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES. DISABILITIES SHOULD NOT BE ENUMERATED BY MEDICAL CAUSE, BECAUSE SUCH LISTS ALWAYS EXCLUDE SOMEBODY. NO PERSON MUST BE EXCLUDED, NO MATTER HOW UNPOPULAR HIS OR HER DISABILITY.

FULL PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION SHOULD BE PROVIDED IN ALL AREAS OF PUBLIC INTERACTION, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT; TELECOMMUNICATIONS; AIR AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION; HOUSING; EDUCATION; HEALTH CARE AND ALL SOCIAL SERVICES; LONG TERM CARE AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS; RECREATION, VOTING AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS ALL PUBLIC PLACES, WHETHER GOVERNMENT OR PRIVATE, SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO BE FULLY ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

OF COURSE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF ACCUMULATED ATTITUDINAL AND PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO BE OVERCOME IN ONE YEAR OR ONE DECADE, A NEW HUMAN RIGHTS PACKAGE SHOULD STRIKE A CAREFUL BALANCE BETWEEN THE IMMEDIATE ELIMINATION OF DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF BUSINESS AND ALL CITIZENS.

IN CASES OF PROVABLE UNDUE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP FOR BUSINESS AND OPERATORS OF PUBLIC FACILITIES, ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF ACCESS AND SERVICES CAN BE ACCEPTABLE FOR REASONABLE PERIODS OF TIME DURING WHICH IDEAL FORMS ARE BEING DEVELOPED. BUT THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE WITH THE PRINCIPLE THAT FULL EQUALITY IS THE CURRENT LAW, OR WITH THE REOUIREMENT THAT A GOOD FAITH EFFORT BE MADE TO PROVIDE FULL EQUALITY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE WITH THE REQUIREMENT THAT ALL NEW SYSTEMS AND RENOVATED OR NEW FACILITIES MUST BE COMPLETELY ACCESSIBLE ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL BARRIER FREE DESIGN. THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE WITH PREJUDICE AT ANY TIME OR IN ANY

PLACE.

IT IS ALSO ESSENTIAL THAT A HUMAN RIGHTS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE MAKE SPECIAL PROVISION FOR PROMPT AND HARMONIOUS COMPLIANCE.

SUGGESTED AREAS OF FOCUS INCLUDE: VIGOROUS, VISIBLE ENFORCEMENT; BALANCED REMEDIES THAT ENCOURAGE COMPLIANCE, BUT NOT A HOLOCAUST OF LITIGATION; SPECIFIC METHODS OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION; TAX INCENTIVES FOR PROGRESSIVE, VOLUNTARY ACTION; REQUIREMENTS THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE PROCESS OF CREATION AND IMPLEMENTATION; SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAMS AND FULL MEDIA COMMUNICATION TO INFORM PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, BUSINESS, OPERATORS OF PUBLIC FACILITIES, GOVERNMENT AND ALL CITIZENS OF THEIR RIGHTS, OBLIGATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES; AND A NAME FOR THE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE THAT DRAMATICALLY COMMUNICATES ITS PURPOSE.

SECOND EMPOWERMENT EVERY NATION MUST ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE, LONG RANGE POLICY OF AGGRESSIVE ACTION TO EMPOWER ALL OF ITS CITIZENS TO BE MAXIMALLY PRODUCTIVE IN TERMS OF QUALITY LIVING. EMPOWERMENT MUST BE THE FIRST PRIORITY OF GOVERNMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND INDIVIDUALS.

MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT THE SAME OLD EMPTY POLITICAL BOTTLES WITH NEW LABELS.

I SPEAK OF A MASSIVE REVISION OF THE DIALOGUE OF OUR CULTURE FROM ESCAPIST INSTANT GRATIFICATION TO INFORMATION AND VALUES THAT EMPOWER .

I SPEAK OF A MASSIVE REALLOCATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RESOURCES FROM CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION, CONFLICT AND PATERNALISTIC POWER TO SYSTEMATIC INVESTMENT IN THE VERY SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENTS IN EMPOWERMENT THAT HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED IN AREAS SUCH AS BUSINESS,

TECHNOLOGY, SPORTS, SPACE TRAVEL, AND INDEPENDENCE
ORIENTED
DISABILITY SERVICES.

I SPEAK OF FAMILIES, EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND PUBLIC MEDIA
RADICALLY REFOCUSED TO PROVIDE LIFELONG DEVELOPMENT
TOWARD EMPOWERMENT.

I SPEAK OF A CONTINUUM OF LIFELONG SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES FOR ALL PEOPLE, RESTRUCTURED TO FOSTER
EMPOWERMENT RATHER THAN DEPENDENCY. I SPEAK OF
REHABILITATION, INDEPENDENT LIVING, TRANSITION,
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT, AND PERSONAL ASSISTANCE
SERVICES
FOR EMPOWERMENT I SPEAK OF ECONOMIC AID,
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, COMMUNICATION AND QUALITY,
AFFORDABLE INSURANCE, LEGAL AND HEALTH SERVICES FOR
EMPOWERMENT.

I SPEAK OF MAJOR LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION BY~BUSINESS
AND LABOR IN PUBLIC EDUCATION, PUBLIC SERVICES, THE
PUBLIC MEDIA TO EMPOWER ALL PEOPLE.

I SPEAK OF EMPLOYMENT WHERE FLEXIBLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS,
HOURS, PLACES OF WORK AND PERSONAL ASSISTANCE AND JOB
COACHING ARE INTEGRATED COMPONENTS OF THE SYSTEM, AND
WHERE A PASSIONATE SCIENCE OF EMPOWERMENT REPLACES
THE PRIMITIVE RELIGION OF PUREAUCRACY AND ITS PRIESTHOOD
OF PRIVILEGE.

AND YES, I SPEAK OF ENTIRELY NEW KINDS OF COMMUNITIES
DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE THE MASSIVE WASTE AND
INACCESSIBILITY OF 19TH CENTURY MODELS, AND TO UTILIZE
THE MAGNIFICENT POTENTIAL OF SCIENCE AND DEMOCRACY TO
EMPOWER ALL PEOPLE.

I SPEAK OF AN ACCESSIBLE, STATE OF THE ART
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM THAT WILL MAKE EVERY HOME,
FARM, HOTEL ROOM, OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL INSTITUTION INTO
A UNIVERSITY, A PLACE OF WORK, A SHOPPING MALL AND A

CENTER TO ACCESS SERVICES.

I SPEAK OF REPLACING FREEWAYS, TRAFFIC JAMS, GHETTOS, POLLUTION, AND BUILDINGS THAT ARE EMPTY 75% OF THE TIME WITH QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE COMMERCIAL, PUBLIC SERVICE, RESIDENTIAL, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL FACILITIES THAT ARE MINUTES APART BY UNDERGROUND SHUTTLE OR BY A STROLL THROUGH A SHELTERED MALL OR A CONTINUOUS PARK.

COLLEAGUES, OUR AGGRESSIVE AGENDA OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND EMPOWERMENT WILL GIVE RISE TO THE TRADITIONAL OBJECTIONS.

IT WILL BE SAID THAT IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE IN THIS TIME OF RECESSION AND INCREASING DEBT₁ THAT IT IS POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE, THAT IT SHOULD BE APPROACHED GRADUALLY.

IF WE ACCEPT THESE TIRED EXCUSES, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EVERY NATION WILL STILL BE SECOND CLASS HUMAN BEINGS IN THE YEAR 3,000, AND HUMAN CULTURE ITSELF WILL BE DISABLED.

SHOULD EQUALITY BE APPROACHED GRADUALLY, IN PARTS? THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS PARTIAL EQUALITY. APARTHEID FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN AMERICA IS NO MORE ACCEPTABLE THAN IT IS FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

EQUALITY NOW!

IS EMPOWERMENT POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE? ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT INDEPENDENCE IN INDIA AND AMERICA? ISN'T THAT WHAT THE SOVIET BUREAUCRATS TOLD THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE? I KNOW THAT'S WHAT WE WERE TOLD ABOUT ADA.

EMPOWERMENT NOW!

IS EQUALITY BAD FOR BUSINESS? IS EMPOWERMENT UNAFFORDABLE IN THIS TIME OF BUDGET DEFICITS AND RECESSION? ON THE CONTRARY WE CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO

EMPOWER.

PRESIDENT BUSH HAS ESTIMATED THE ANNUAL COST OF EXCLUDING 2/3 OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES FROM THE PRODUCTIVE MAINSTREAM TO BE ABOUT \$200 BILLION CASH IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PAYMENTS, AND GOING UP EVERY YEAR. THE COST IN OTHER NATIONS IS EQUALLY PUNITIVE.

OUR IRRESPONSIBLE STATUS QUO IS THE CAUSE OF OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IT IS IRRATIONAL AND IT IS IMMORAL TO CONTINUE FOR ONE MORE MINUTE THE POLICIES WHICH SQUANDER THE MAGNIFICENT POTENTIAL OF SCIENCE AND DEMOCRACY, WHICH IMPOSE ON OUR CHILDREN CRUSHING BURDENS OF DEBT AND POVERTY AND WHICH THREATEN A CHAOTIC COLLAPSE OF MODERN CIVILIZATION.

EMPOWERMENT IS NOT A SUBSIDY FOR DISABLED PEOPLE. IT IS THE PROVEN, ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL SOLUTION FOR ALL PEOPLE.

EVERY TIME MODERN DEMOCRACY HAS MADE A MAJOR INVESTMENT IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF A MARGINALLY PRODUCTIVE POPULATION OR AN IMPROVED MEANS OF PRODUCTION WE HAVE HAD ANOTHER ECONOMIC BOOM.

AGGRESSIVE INVESTMENT IN AN EMPOWERMENT SOCIETY WILL PROVIDE JOBS FOR A CENTURY FOR DISABLED AND NON~DISABLED ALIKE - AND EVERY PROJECT COMPLETED WILL LOWER THE OVERHEAD AND RAISE THE QUALITY OF HUMAN CULTURE. FINALLY, THERE WILL BE A PROSPERITY AND A QUALITY OF LIFE THAT WILL TRANSCEND THE IMAGINATION OF UTOPIAN FICTION.

EQUALITY NOW! EMPOWERMENT NOW!

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO DO THE JOB?

WHAT IS REQUIRED IS COURAGEOUS, SELF-DISCIPLINED, UNIFYING LEADERSHIP FOR EQALITY AND EMPOWERMENT AS TOP PRIORITIES OF OUR CULTURE. LEADERSHIP BY THE UNITED NATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS AT ALL LEVELS; LEADERSHIP BY BUSINESS AN~ LABOR, THE PUBLIC MEDIA, RELIGION, CIVIC

ORGANIZATIONS, FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS.

ABOVE ALL, THERE MUST BE PASSIONATE, POSITIVE, CREATIVE LEADERSHIP BY A UNITED DISABILITY COMMUNITY. EQUALITY AND PROSPERITY HAVE NEVER BEEN VOLUNTARILY HANDED DOWN TO A DIVIDED, APATHETIC MINORITY.

WE MUST MAINTAIN THE SPLENDID DISABILITY COMMUNITY ADVOCACY THAT HAS CARRIED US TO HISTORIC VICTORIES. BUT THAT IS NOT ENOUGH.

WHERE WE ARE THOUSANDS WE MUST BECOME MILLIONS.
WHERE WE ARE FRAGMENTED WE MUST BECOME ORGANIZED.
WHERE WE ARE DIVIDED WE MUST BECOME UNITED.

WE MUST LEARN THE POLITICS OF EQUALS AND THE ART OF COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE MEDIA OF THE NINETIES. WE MUST LEARN TO GENERATE OUR OWN ECONOMIC AND HUMAN RESOURCES.

WE MUST REACH OUT TO EDUCATE AND JOIN WITH OTHER MINORITIES, BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT AND ALL OF OUR DISABILITY COMMUNITY COLLEAGUES IN EVERY CITY AND VILLAGE OF EVERY NATION IN THE WORLD.

WE MUST SUPPORT AND EXPAND DISABLED PEOPLES' INTERNATIONAL, REHABILITATION INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER WORLD FOCUS DISABILITY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

WE MUST GO FORWARD TOGETHER WITH THE SPIRIT OF GANDHI AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, WITH LOVE AND WITH TRUTH, WITH PASSIONATE RATIONALITY, WITH MILITANT FIRMNESS IN THE PRINCIPLES OF EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT.

WE MUST STRUGGLE FOR HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES TO WIN.

COLLEAGUES, THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY, THE GRAVITY OF THE CHALLENGES, THE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT DESTINY PRESENTS TO US NOW, IS ALMOST BEYOND COMPREHENSION. PEOPLE EVERYWHERE DEMAND TO BE INCLUDED IN THE GOOD LIFE THAT IS POSSIBLE. THERE IS A PUBLIC PASSION FOR

PROFOUND CULTURAL CHANGE THAT IS UNPRECEDENTED IN ALL HISTORY.

IF WE LEAD THE WORLD WILL FOLLOW. IF WE DO NOT, DEMAGOGUES WILL RUSH IN AND HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF 21ST CENTURY HUMANS WILL BE CONDEMNED TO CONTINUED ISOLATION, POVERTY AND EARLY DEATH.

I THINK OF MY DAUGHTER BETSY WITH THREE CHILDREN, DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND FOUR DAYS AFTER SHE WAS DIAGNOSED AS HAVING MS.

I THINK OF MY BROTHER PETER, A SMALL BUSINESSMAN, WHO FOUR YEARS AGO WAS FACED WITH USING A WHEEL CHAIR LIKE MINE₁ AND THE MASSIVE DISCRIMINATION. HE SAID, "I WOULD RATHER BE DEAD THAN DEPENDENT."
- AND HE CHOSE TO BE DEAD.

I THINK OF THE PEOPLE IMPRISONED. IN THE INSTITUTIONS AND BACKROOMS OF MOSCOW, AND BEIJING. I THINK OF THE PEOPLE SLEEPING AND BEGGING AND DYING IN THE STREETS OF WASHINGTON, BOMBAY AND RIO DE JANEIRO.

I THINK OF OUR GRANDCHILDREN AND OF THE GENERATIONS OF CHILDREN YET. UNBORN IN EVERY NATION WHO HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVES OF QUALITY.

WE MUST UNITE. WE MUST ACT. WE MUST WIN.

AND I BELIEVE WE WILL WIN BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN YOU. YOU ARE THE GREAT PIONEERS AT THE GREATEST OF ALL FRONTIERS, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. YOU ARE THE REAL BEAUTY OF THE HUMAN UNIVERSE. MY ASSOCIATION WITH YOU IS THE MOST PROFOUND HAPPINESS IN MY LIFE. I LOVE YOU. I AM WITH YOU ALL THE WAY.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE OVERCOME.

TOGETHER, WE SHALL OVERCOME.

HUMAN RIGHTS NOW!

EMPOWERMENT NOW!

