

Speech

Speech by: Robert Morgan

To: Consumer Education Conference  
Charlotte, North Carolina

September 14, 1972

The environment, law and justice, consumer rights, business rights, and many other such terms which were hardly known to the general public a decade ago represent major problems today, which are taxing the capabilities of government at every level. And, to be sure, there is an awareness that such problems do not usually begin or end at state lines. There are those among us who say that because this is true that solutions must be and can only be found at the federal level of our government.

There are the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_, and others who almost daily feed into the congressional hopper bill after bill dealing with everything from smooth emission of a clay-yard trolley to the stack of a major steel mill.

There are the Proxmires, the Kennedys, the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and others who would load the legislative mills with proposed legislation that would make almost every conceivable wrong a federal

crime to be tried by the cumbersome federal judiciary and punishable by a federal system of corrections which hasn't shown much promise at rehabilitation in the past and holds little prospect for the future.

And, for every consumer wrong or business right that is brought to public light by some shrewd and cunning con-artist, there is some white knight in shining armor ready to mount and ride charging to the Federal Trade Commission, or to the Federal Power Commission carrying with him a new array of bureaucratic lawyers or investigators.

We learn then, to the chagrin of all of us when the dust has settled and the glory of the moment has passed, we find still more and more bureaucracy that so often is unable to function effectively because it has become entwined in its own governmental and monumental red tape.

While in fact these and many like problems are national in scope, our great American experience has taught us one thing, if it has taught us nothing else, and that is that problems can best be solved by those

closest to them. I have always believed as that great North Carolinian Charles B. Aycock who said, near the turn of the century, that government works best which is closest to the people - close enough so that if the shoe pinches, it can be felt quickly.

And, if we are to meet the challenges of our time, they must be met by responsible state and local governments. If we really believe in states rights, as so many of us profess, then we must also accept the premise that states rights are for responsible states.

The Environmental Protection Agency today is so burdened with rules, regulations, priorities that it has almost ceased to function.

The federal courts and federal correction centers have demonstrated that they can no longer administer justice surely and swiftly, let alone rehabilitate the wayward and delinquent.

The FTC has recognized itself that it is totally inadequate to deal with any but the most flagrant violations, and even in those cases, months, years and

even decades pass before any effective action is taken -  
as in the anti-biotic cases - while the small, independent  
businessman and the helpless consumer is forgotten.