

SENATOR ROBERT MORGAN
DEDICATION OF GOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES FACILITIES CENTER
KINGS MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA
AUGUST 4, 1979 -- 11:00

It is certainly my pleasure to be with you this morning to participate in the dedication of the new Kings Mountain Governmental Services Facilities Center. The dedication of a new building representing the concern and hard work of the people of a community is surely one of the proudest events in which any public official can participate. The opening of this impressive new city hall represents the belief of this

community in serving people through good government.

On a similar occasion elsewhere in our state near the beginning of this decade, Justice Beverly Lake spoke eloquently of what a building such as this can symbolize.

He quoted Scripture saying, "A man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses," and he went on to say that, so it is with a community, a state or a nation. The final measure of a community's greatness, like that of every man and woman, is its spiritual strength -- in what does

it put its trust and its faith?

Just as churches and synagogues throughout our land remind us that our people put their highest faith in God, so do government buildings remind us that as a nation we also put our faith in democracy -- in the notion that people can live together in harmony, solving their problems together, and dedicated to the principle that government exists to provide justice, peace, prosperity, security, and liberty for all our people.

This city hall is a reminder to all people that the citizens of Kings Mountain believe in and demand good government -- government that is responsive and responsible, effective and efficient.

This city hall is also a symbol of a conviction I have had throughout my life. It symbolizes the principle that the best government is the government which is closest to the people.

But this city hall is more than a symbol of these ideals. It also reminds us of the dedication and faithfulness of those who work within it, and

underscores the fact that there cannot be good government without good people willing to serve in it.

Mayor John Henry Moss is one of the few full-time mayors of a city this size, and there can be little doubt that he is one of the best whether full or part-time. He is highly skilled at putting the federal government to work for the people of Kings Mountain, by making sure that this community competes skillfully and effectively for federal funds for which it is eligible.

This new city hall, built with \$1 million of

funding from the Economic Development Administration under the 1976 Local Public Works Act, relied upon the planning and expertise of local officials in determining the needs of the community, and what kind of facility would best serve those needs.

In that respect it illustrates the best aspect of the federal structure, by showing us that the federal government can work in creative partnership with local and state officials, and can help facilitate the work of communities in meeting local needs.

Yet we do have a long way to go in making sure

that the federal government does not sometimes make the job of meeting local needs more difficult and costly.

We have not yet witnessed adequate change in the way state and local units of government have to deal with Washington. I still hear speeches on the floor of the Senate which assume that local government lacks competence and fairness, and that the federal government must keep them in line. Such attitudes belong to the dark ages, because they are so out of date, and so out of touch with reality.

As Mayor Moss, I'm sure can testify, dealing with the federal government is not the easiest thing in the world to do.

Chief among major obstacles is the lack of coordination among governmental agencies responsible for various programs which impact on small cities. HUD, the Department of Agriculture, the Farmers Home Administration, HEW, the Departments of Transportation and Commerce, and the Revenue Service all come into the picture.

As is so often the case with federal government,

there is no real guarantee that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing.

There is also no guarantee that some small communities won't simply fall between the cracks in terms of eligibility for various programs. We need to rationalize the federal structure in this regard.

But establishing eligibility for any specific program is just the beginning. The process of dealing with the federal government is cumbersome and costly. As the House Banking Committee has noted, a total of 534 federal grant programs to state, and

local governments generate over 49 million transactions with federal agencies each year. Often, grantees have to deal with several agencies on a single project, each with its own forms and procedures. In the health field, for example, 10 different agencies administer some 230 health programs. State and local governments expend each year some 24 million hours of work, costing some five billion dollars, merely to meet federal paperwork requirements.

We are working closely with local officials to try to change this situation. I believe some progress

has been made. But we still have much to do.

These problems -- as indeed most all of the problems we face -- be they in economics or energy -- are complex.

Their solution will demand a mobilization of all the energy, talent, and dedication Americans can muster.

Those of us who have lived in small cities and towns know there is a richness to the quality of life in small-town and rural America which goes beyond

mere material possession. I believe the way of life in those areas is and can continue to be a source of strength and stability to our country.

I believe that in all areas of national policy, we do not need a policy handed down by Washington -- but a policy formulated by many segments of our society -- a policy which draws on the perspective and expertise of local and state officials, as well as the federal government, of businesses and union, of the financial community, environmentalists, and all manner of informed individuals. In short,