

ADDRESS BY ROBERT MORGAN
CYSTIC FIBROSIS KICK-OFF DINNER
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA
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I want to talk tonight about our natural resources.

Every day you can pick up the newspaper or a magazine and read a pessimistic article about the coming shortage of this or that. Recently, I saw in the Raleigh News and Observer an article about petroleum.

It dealt with the fact that the use and consumption of petroleum products in America is continually rising every day. When we think in terms of the strength of this great country of ours, we usually think in the terms of material resources. How much oil and petroleum products do we have in this country? How much iron ore do we have? Do we have enough coal to last for generations to come? That is normally what we think of when we are talking in

terms of natural resources. But those are not the resources

I mean tonight.

And one of the great debates that is going on in Washington every day since I have been a member of the United States Senate is the relative strength of America's military resources, with regard to the Communist-bloc countries of the world. Is Russia really stronger militarily than America? Let me give you my opinion.

It is true today that Russia has twice as many men under arms as we do in the United States. Russia has four million men in the military. We have less than two million men in the military forces in this country. Russia has over 40 thousand tanks spread all along the Eastern frontier in

Europe, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslōvakia, Poland and so forth. We in the West have only nine thousand tanks, and the Assistant Secretary of the Army was in my office some time ago with a chart attempting to show me that their tanks are just as capable as the American tanks.

He showed me the number of bombers that Russia has in comparison to the number of bombers that we in America have. We talked about the number of submarines. We talked about the number of missiles. And to be perfectly candid with you about the only positive thing I can recall that he said to me is that we do have a great deal more helicopters than the Russians and they are far better than the Russian helicopters. Well, from all of this would you say that we are a second-rate power to Russia. The answer is clearly no.

We are a first-rate power.

We are the first-rate power because of the people of America. The people of our country are our greatest resources. These are the "natural resources" I want to talk about tonight -- not iron ore or gasoline or jets or tanks. And I want to talk about the waste of our greatest resource -- human life and human talent.

You know, some time ago the Lord Chancellor of England and the Speaker of the House of Commons from England flew to Washington and brought with them that great document, the Magna Charta, that laid the foundation for all of the freedoms that you and I enjoy today. We had a dinner for them one evening, and I sat between Lord and Lady Rothbottom -- I am always afraid I will say that wrong -- and we began to talk

about our backgrounds.

I told them I was born in central North Carolina on a tobacco and cotton farm and of parents of meager means. When I said that to Lord Rothbottom, he said, "You know, you could never have happened in England. Under the circumstances under which you were born, and under which you grew up, you could never have been a member of the Upper House of Parliament in England, as you are here in the United States."

What made the difference? I got where I am today because my mother struggled to make sure my life was not a wasted resource, just because of the social class I was born in. I tell this story not to reflect upon my mother's

background but to praise her for her determination. My mother was illiterate. She was unable to read or write because she didn't grow up in a community where there was public school education available. But she recognized in her own children that there were some capabilities that could be developed and through her dogged determination, even though she was illiterate, and through that of my father, who possessed very little more education, my sisters and I were given opportunities to develop our capabilities that we would not have normally have had. Mamma was determined that I would have an opportunity for an education and one of the most vivid memories I have of my mother was as I drove home from Wake Forest Law School on a Friday afternoon to find Mamma out in the field beside of the House, picking

cotton and earning enough money to keep me in college so that I, too, could develop these capabilities. She knew what wasted human resources were, and she saw to it my life was not lost because of social handicaps. All of us in one way or another are handicapped or have been handicapped. And it has only been because of the generosity of those who have gone on before us, and the determination of people willing to help others make use of their abilities that many of us are not wasted human resources.

Many of us have overcome social handicaps, as we could not have done in the England of Lord Rothbottom. But really, these are minor. Physical and mental handicaps are much tougher to deal with.

I was over at Rocky Mount a few Sundays ago to dedicate a sheltered workshop there. And I talked to a elderly gentleman who wouldn't even stop working long enough on Sunday afternoon for us to dedicate the building. He was working there at a metal lathe, turning screws on the end of a black rod that was going to be used by one of the local manufacturers to make lamps. And I asked someone who knew him well I said, "What did this man do before he came here and worked and began to work in this industry?" And the man said, "You know what he did? All of his life he pushed himself around the streets of Rocky Mount sitting on a little square roller with some wheels on it. He would just sit and push himself around the streets." But because of the dedication of people over there who would not see that

life go to waste, there is a man who is living a very meaningful life, making a very meaningful contribution to society and earning his own livelihood.

I talked at another sheltered workshop in Smithfield last week -- and spoke with a young lady who described to me very proudly the job that she was doing. She was assembling small parts. And I asked her where she had been beforehand. And she told me that up until she came here she had been in one of our institutions in North Carolina. And I said, "Were you working there?" No, she wasn't working there. But, she said, "since I came here, and have began to assemble these products, my coordination is getting better." And she was just as proud of that job as she could be. She was proud of the fact that she had earned some money for

herself. And there are literally hundreds and thousands of others across North Carolina and across this nation who could be making the same kind of contributions to society if they were only given an opportunity.

Social handicaps are a waste. Mental and physical handicaps are a waste. But what is the greatest waste of all? It is the kind of waste which cuts life off before it really gets started. There is no more cruel waste in the world than that which ends the life of a child.

To the defeat of that kind of waste, this campaign we begin here tonight is dedicated. Tonight, people who care to see that the lives of their fellowmen are not thrown away, dedicate themselves to this purpose.

Cystic fibrosis, as I am sure you all know, is the greatest killer of children which is genetically-linked.

It is time to add it to the list of diseases which have long-since passed into memory as threats to every child -- polio, diphtheria, scarlet fever, whooping cough.

The origin and exact nature of cystic fibrosis are still unknown. Since 1955, progress has been made in alleviating the disease, without defeating it outright. Then, a child inheriting the illness could not expect to go to the first grade. Now, over half reach the age of 18. Through research, treatments have been found which will reduce the severity and speed of lung damage, but not yet can we reverse that damage.

I do not believe the cure for cystic fibrosis will be found on Mars, where our space craft is now conducting experiments. But I am sure that here on earth, intelligence and dedication like that which built and launched the Mars explorer can and will find a way to save the life of a child.

To save a child is to save the ultimate resource we have in this world. Social limitations, limitations of mind or body -- these are not losses to compare with the loss of a young life.

It is time to stop wasting that most precious natural resource.

You know, some years ago I became acquainted with Bill Kiser, who lives in Winston-Salem. Bill has Cerebral Palsy,

and you and I cannot understand a word he says, because he does not have much use of any of his limbs, and he also talks with the greatest difficulty.

For years, he was wasted. He was thought to be retarded or even insane, and he was given no education until he was 40 years old. But finally someone tried to help, finding ways for Bill to type, so that he could convey his thoughts. And they found that instead of an insane person, harbored up in that withered body of his was a keen intellect.

And Bill Kiser today writes a syndicated column called "A Handicapped Mailbag". You have probably heard it on radio stations on Saturday morning and it is carried in newspapers across the country -- because somebody took the time to help him develop his capabilities.

I was called on one afternoon to dedicate the
Chapel at the Crippled Children's Camp in Southern Pines.

And as I began to wonder what I was going to say I
called on my friend, Bill Kiser, and I asked Bill to write
me a speech, and to say in that speech exactly what he
would say if he were able to stand before that audience
and deliver it. And I promised him that I would give it
exactly as he wrote it. And of all the speeches that I
have ever given in my life that was the most beautiful
and heartwarming speech that I have ever heard. I will never
forget the way in which he closed that speech. He said if
the headlines in the morning papers were to declare that
some great natural resource such as oil or gold or other
minerals had been discovered in North Carolina that it

wouldn't take us long to find the money to develop and market those resources. But he said we have the same kind of resources harbored up in our handicapped citizens in North Carolina and all in the world that we need to do is to make the commitment of our own time and our own money and our own resources to enable these people to develop their skills and to market them.

Those of you gathered here today have decided to do something even more important. You have decided to help children, not just to find ways to use their skills in spite of handicaps, but just to have a chance at life, to begin with.

That is the worthiest thing you could do. I am proud

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