

GOALS FOR
AMERICANS

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**PROGRAMS FOR ACTION
IN THE SIXTIES**

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Goals for Americans



comprising

*The Report of the President's
Commission on National Goals*

and

*Chapters Submitted for the
Consideration of the Commission*

A Spectrum  **Book**
Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Administered by
The American Assembly
Columbia University

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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PRESS OF
JUDD & DETWEILER, INC.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Sixth Printing—July 1962

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President, The American Assembly, Columbia University; President, Brown University, 1937-55.

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Chairman of the Board, General Dynamics Corporation; Secretary of the Army, 1950-53.

ERWIN D. CANHAM

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GEORGE MEANY

President, AFL-CIO.

Preface

Goals for Americans—the Report of the President's Commission on National Goals and the essays accompanying it—is designed to encourage informed discussion by the American public. The book will also provide a basis for deliberations by regional, state and municipal sessions of The American Assembly as well as by civic groups, classes and other discussion meetings.

President Eisenhower requested that the Commission be administered by The American Assembly, Columbia University, because of its status as a non-partisan educational institution and its established practices for encouraging wide consideration of public issues. The Assembly, founded by President Eisenhower in 1950 when he was President of Columbia, takes no official stand itself on any of the topics it presents.

Private financing and fiscal management of the Commission were provided under the auspices of the Assembly. The Commission wishes to record its gratitude to the following foundations, which gave financial support: Carnegie Corporation of New York, Maurice and Laura Falk Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Johnson Foundation (Racine), Richardson Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, U. S. Steel Foundation. The foundations are not responsible for the views stated in the Report or in the chapters.

A special word of gratitude is due to President Grayson Kirk and the Trustees of Columbia University for waiving the normal administrative charges for Assembly projects.

The Commission is appreciative of the efforts of members of the White House staff, who have assisted in every possible way without seeking to influence the Commission's work.

In devising methods to assure the widest possible circulation of the Report, the Commission has had the valuable, and unpaid, assistance of Messrs. Harold Brown, Merle Colby, Douglas Larsen, and Albert Zack. The Advertising Council will conduct a public service campaign to assist in wide circulation of the Report and essays.

Letter of Transmittal

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON NATIONAL GOALS

administered by

THE AMERICAN ASSEMBLY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
New York 27, New York

November 16, 1960

Dear Mr. President:

We transmit herewith the Report of the President's Commission on National Goals. It is in compliance with your request to "develop a broad outline of coordinated national policies and programs" and to "set up a series of goals in various areas of national activity."

We have respected your desire that our efforts be non-partisan, and have no connection with the government. All financial support has come from private sources, with the sole exception of unfurnished offices temporarily available for our small staff. The only participation of government officials has been to supply requested data.

We asked the counsel of approximately 100 people expert in various topics, and invited 14 men and women of acknowledged competence to write essays for our consideration. The response was generous, many accepting the assignment at considerable personal sacrifice. We desire to record our deep gratitude to them. We have also drawn upon excellent work and reports in relevant fields, by many groups and institutions.

However, the Report expresses views that reflect solely our own judgment, sometimes in accord with and other times at variance from those of the several authors. This judgment was arrived at during long hours at the conference table, and members of the Commission participated actively in drafting the Report.

We do not expect our recommendations to command unanimous acceptance. Rather it is our hope that they will evoke active discussion. Under the democratic process this is the path to a national consensus. The Report and the accompanying chapters will be published in cloth and paper bound editions. We hope the volume will have wide circulation.

Our work would have been impossible without the assistance of a brilliant staff. Mr. William Bundy, the Staff Director, Mr. Hugh Calkins, his Deputy, Mr. Guy Coriden, Jr., Miss Barbara Donald, and Mr. Hubert Kay, together with Miss Blanche Moore and Mrs. Margaret Keefe, have given themselves unsparingly to this task. They have had the loyal and effective support of the officers and staff of The American Assembly, especially Mr. Peter Grenquist, Mrs. Olive Haycox, and Mrs. Sylva Sinanian.

Judge Learned Hand participated in the early meetings which established the procedures and policies of the Commission. His wisdom and cooperative temper made his participation extremely valuable. To our great regret, because of ill health he was forced to withdraw from active participation before the Report of the Commission was drafted.

We express our gratitude for the opportunity which you opened to us by our appointment.

Respectfully,

Erwin D. Canham
James B. Conant
Colgate W. Darden, Jr.
Crawford H. Greenewalt
Alfred M. Gruenther
Clark Kerr
James R. Killian, Jr.
George Meany
Frank Pace, Jr., *Vice Chairman*
Henry M. Wriston, *Chairman*

The President,
The White House

Contents

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL	xi
THE REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON NATIONAL GOALS	
INTRODUCTION	1
PART I: GOALS AT HOME	3
1. <i>The Individual</i>	3
2. <i>Equality</i>	3
3. <i>The Democratic Process</i>	4
4. <i>Education</i>	6
5. <i>The Arts and Sciences</i>	7
6. <i>The Democratic Economy</i>	9
7. <i>Economic Growth</i>	10
8. <i>Technological Change</i>	11
9. <i>Agriculture</i>	12
10. <i>Living Conditions</i>	13
11. <i>Health and Welfare</i>	14
PART II: GOALS ABROAD	15
12. <i>Helping to Build an Open and Peaceful World</i>	15
13. <i>The Defense of the Free World</i>	18
14. <i>Disarmament</i>	19
15. <i>The United Nations</i>	20
PART III: A FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING	20
A CONCLUDING WORD	22
ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION	24

ACCOMPANYING CHAPTERS
BY INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS

AMERICAN FUNDAMENTALS

CHAPTER 1: THE INDIVIDUAL, Henry M. Wriston 35

Fundamentals, 35; Reconsideration, 38; Progress, 39; The Race Problem, 42; The Individual and the Group, 48; Self Fulfillment, 53.

CHAPTER 2: THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS,
Clinton Rossiter 61

What Is Democracy?, 61; Time of Trial, 64; The Basic Institutions, 66; The Conduct of Government, 68; Parties and Interest Groups, 70; Communications: Circus or Forums?, 72; Private Governments, 73; The Pursuit of Democratic Goals, 74; The Imperative of Responsibility, 75; The Role of the Citizen, 76; We Act for All Mankind, 78.

GOALS AT HOME

CHAPTER 3: NATIONAL GOALS IN EDUCATION,
John W. Gardner 81

The Teacher, 82; The Student, 83; The Curriculum, 86; Innovation in Education, 88; Higher Education, 90; Education Outside the Formal System, 94; The Sponsorship of Education, 95.

CHAPTER 4: A GREAT AGE FOR SCIENCE,
Warren Weaver 103

The Strategy of Science, 107; The Role of Science, 112; Science and Education, 114; The Support of Science, 119; Conclusions and Statements of Goals, 122.

CHAPTER 5: THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN CULTURE,
August Heckscher 127

Material and Cultural Progress Compared, 127; The Nature of Goals, 128; Time in Today's World, 129; The Mass Market and the Popular Arts, 130; The Fine Arts and the Creative Few, 133; The Maintenance of Excellence, 135; Fine Arts and the Liberal Arts, 136; The Institutions of Art, 138; Government and the Arts, 141; Toward a Positive Attitude, 145.

CHAPTER 6: AN EFFECTIVE AND DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION OF THE ECONOMY,	
Clark Kerr	149

The Democratic Economy, 151; The Effective Economy, 157.

CHAPTER 7: HIGH EMPLOYMENT AND GROWTH IN THE AMERICAN ECONOMY, Herbert Stein and Edward F. Denison	163
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Reducing Unemployment and Operating Close to Capacity, 164; National Production and National Needs, 168; Measures to Accelerate the Growth of Capacity, 176.

CHAPTER 8: TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE,	
Thomas J. Watson, Jr.	193

The Recent Past, 194; The Next Decade, 195; Improving Men's Lives Through Technological Change, 196; Encouraging Technological Change, 199; Sharing Technological Change, 202.

CHAPTER 9: FARM POLICY FOR THE SIXTIES,	
Lauren K. Soth	207

Performance of Agriculture, 207; Sources and Symptoms of the Farm Problem, 209; Goals in Farm Policy, 214; Farm Adjustment Policies, 216.

CHAPTER 10: FRAMEWORK FOR AN URBAN SOCIETY,	
Catherine Bauer Wurster	225

Current Trends and Shifting Perspectives, 225; The Concrete Problems: Renewal, 229; Suburbia, 232; Housing, 234; Transportation, 237; Vanishing Open Space and Spreading Pollution, 239; The Metropolitan Impasse, 241; The Regional Environment and the States, 244; In Conclusion: Ends and Means, 245.

CHAPTER 11: MEETING HUMAN NEEDS,	
Dr. James P. Dixon, Jr.	249

Health, 250; The Reduction of Poverty through Income Security and Welfare Services, 255; Neglect and Delinquency: Assistance to Children and Understanding the Problem, 257; People, Facilities, and Money, 261.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER 12: THE FEDERAL SYSTEM, Morton Grodzins . . . 265

The Sharing of Functions, 265; Attempts to Unwind the Federal System, 267; A Point of History, 268; Dynamics of Sharing: The Politics of the Federal System, 271; Goals for the System of Sharing, 276.

CHAPTER 13: THE PUBLIC SERVICE, Wallace S. Sayre . . . 285

The Federal Service, 286; The President in Charge, 287; The Search for Talent, 289; Mobility and Choice, 291; Competence and Innovation, 292; The Leadership Core, 292; Recognition and Prestige, 294; State and Local Public Services, 295.

THE WORLD WE SEEK

CHAPTER 14: THE UNITED STATES ROLE IN THE WORLD, William L. Langer . . . 299

General, 299; The Communist Challenge, 302; The Free European Community, 307; The Future of Asia, 312; The Awakening Nations, 316; Latin America, 323; Limitation and Control of Armaments, 324; National Goals and National Purposes, 327.

CHAPTER 15: FOREIGN ECONOMIC POLICY AND OB- JECTIVES, John J. McCloy . . . 331

The Aim of Foreign Economic Policy, 332; Our Policy on World Trade, 335; The U. S. and Regional Groups, 339; Economic Assistance to the Less-developed Lands, 342; Economic Relations with the Communist Bloc, 349; U. S. Balance of Payments, 352; New Forms for Cooperation, 355.

CHAPTER 16: A LOOK FURTHER AHEAD, William P. Bundy . . . 361

Population Growth and Its Impact, 362; The Economic Stature of Major Nations and Areas, 367.

The Commission Report

INTRODUCTION

The paramount goal of the United States was set long ago. It is to guard the rights of the individual, to ensure his development, and to enlarge his opportunity. It is set forth in the Declaration of Independence drafted by Thomas Jefferson and adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The goals we here identify are within the framework of the original plan and are calculated to bring to fruition the dreams of the men who laid the foundation of this country.

They stated their convictions quite simply:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

It was a mighty vision. In the echo of those fateful words can be heard the onrolling thunder of a new age. It was an even broader and bolder declaration than those who made it knew. Its soaring vision enabled our society to meet the trials of emerging nationhood. It placed the young republic securely behind the principle that every human being is of infinite worth. In time it led the nation out of the morass of human slavery. It inspires us still in the struggle against injustice.

To make this vision a reality, a framework of self-government was established nationally and in each state. It rested upon two fundamental principles—the election of representatives from among competing candidates, and the constitutional limitation of power of those elected.

The way to preserve freedom is to live it. Our enduring aim is to build a nation and help build a world in which every human being shall be free to develop his capacities to the fullest. We must rededicate ourselves to this principle and thereby strengthen its appeal to a world in political, social, economic, and technological revolution.

In the 1960's every American is summoned to extraordinary personal responsibility, sustained effort, and sacrifice. For the nation is in grave danger, threatened by the rulers of one-third of mankind, for whom the state is everything, the individual significant only as he serves

the state. These rulers seek the "peace" of a Communist-oriented world, in which freedom is suppressed and the individual permanently subordinated. Supporting their aim are the Soviet Union's great and swiftly growing strength, the industrial and military progress and potential of Red China, a great capacity for political organization and propaganda, and the specious appeal of Communist doctrine to peoples eager for rapid escape from poverty.

Meanwhile, weapons of cataclysmic power have come into existence. A major nuclear conflict would be a world catastrophe; violence even in or between small nations could involve the great powers and spark the holocaust.

The Sino-Soviet threat and modern weapons present great dangers; we have equally great opportunities. With the increase of knowledge and material resources, we have achieved a standard of individual realization new to history. We can continue to improve our own way of life, and at the same time help in the progress of vast numbers in the world whose lives are blighted by chronic sickness, hunger, and illiteracy.

Since 1946, foreign rule has ended for more than one billion people in Asia and Africa. Much of their yearning for independence, for respect, and for abundance has been inspired by Western and especially American example. Nevertheless, historic resentments, inadequate economies, inexperience in self-government, and excessive expectations offer fertile ground for Communist persuasion and conquest. This restless tide of events defines the magnitude of our problems and the scope of our opportunity.

* * * * *

To preserve and enlarge our own liberties, to meet a deadly menace, and to extend the area of freedom throughout the world: these are high and difficult goals. Yet our past performance justifies confidence that they can be achieved if every American will accept personal responsibility for them.

This Report identifies goals and sets forth programs. It is directed to the citizens of this country, each of whom sets his own goals and seeks to realize them in his life, through private groups, and through various levels of government. Choices are hard, and costs heavy. They demand subordination of lesser goals to the greater. But the rewards are beyond calculation, for the future of our nation depends on the result.

At the same time, the United States cannot attain its goals alone, nor by offering the free world grudging alms or condescending leadership. We must lead, but in a spirit of genuine partnership. Together, the free peoples of the world can develop unmatched strength and vindicate the mighty vision of the Declaration.

PART I

GOALS AT HOME

1. THE INDIVIDUAL

The status of the individual must remain our primary concern. All our institutions—political, social, and economic—must further enhance the dignity of the citizen, promote the maximum development of his capabilities, stimulate their responsible exercise, and widen the range and effectiveness of opportunities for individual choice.

From this concern springs our purpose to achieve equal treatment of men and women, to enlarge their incentives and to expand their opportunities for self-development and self-expression. From it comes our insistence on widely distributed political and economic power, on the greatest range of free choice in our economy, and on the fair and democratic exercise of public and private power. It underlies the value we put on education. It guides the pursuit of science. It is the source of our interest in the health and welfare of every citizen.

The great ideas that have moved the world have sprung from unfettered human minds. The spirit of liberty, in which they thrive, makes one man hesitate to impose his will on another. It relies on the conviction that the truth will emerge from free inquiry and exchange of views.

The notion that ideas and individuals must be rejected merely because they are controversial denies the essence of our tradition. Schools and institutions of higher education, and the trustees, board members and legislators responsible for them, have a particular responsibility to ensure freedom of expression by students, faculty and administrators alike. We must bring up young men and women to believe in the individual and to act upon that belief. There are subtle and powerful pressures toward conformity in the economic, social, and political world. They must be resisted so that differences of taste and opinion will remain a constructive force in improving our society.

Unity of purpose must never be confused with unanimity of opinion. Vigorous controversy and the acceptance of dissent as a positive value will renew our strength and demonstrate to the world our calm confidence that truth and reason prevail in a free society.

2. EQUALITY

Vestiges of religious prejudice, handicaps to women, and, most important, discrimination on the basis of race must be recognized as morally wrong, economically wasteful, and in many respects dangerous. In this decade we must sharply lower these last stubborn barriers.

Progress toward realizing these ideals in practice has been extraordinary. We have ever more closely approached a classless society; there has been a revolution in the status of women; education is more nearly available to all; most citizens have opportunities which a century ago were dreamed of by only a handful.

Respect for the individual means respect for every individual. Every man and woman must have equal rights before the law, and an equal opportunity to vote and hold office, to be educated, to get a job and to be promoted when qualified, to buy a home, to participate fully in community affairs. These goals, which are at the core of our system, must be achieved by action at all levels.

Primary responsibility rests with individuals. Habits of prejudice and fear of social and economic pressure restrict employment opportunities and housing choices, cause exclusion from eating places, hotels, and recreation facilities, and inhibit the free action of public officers. No American should remain within the grip of these habits and fears.

The right to vote is basic. Private pressures and discriminatory administration of registration laws must not continue to obstruct it. Predominant state control of voting qualifications is traditional; but if necessary, the basic democratic right to vote must take precedence.

One role of government is to stimulate changes of attitude. Additional municipal, state, and federal legislation is essential.* The federal government should enforce the principle that federal funds shall not be disbursed to employers who discriminate on the basis of race. Similar policies should progressively be applied to federal grants for universities, hospitals, and airports, and to federal housing programs.**

By 1970 discrimination in higher education should be entirely overcome. Every state must make progress in good faith toward desegregation of publicly supported schools.***

3. THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The degree of effective liberty available to its people should be the ultimate test for any nation. Democracy is the only means so far devised by which a nation can meet this test. To preserve and perfect the democratic process in the United States is therefore a primary goal in this as in every decade.

The democratic process functions only when the individual accepts his full responsibility as a citizen by forming considered opinions on public policy and by active participation in the choice of public representatives.

* See the Additional Statement by Mr. Meany, page 29.

** See the Additional Statement by Dr. Darden, page 24.

*** See the Additional Statements by Dr. Kerr, Dr. Killian and Mr. Meany, pages 26, 27, and 29.

Democracy gives reality to our striving for equality. It is the expression of individual self-respect; it clears the way for individual initiative, exercise of responsibility, and use of varied talents. It is basic to the peaceful adjustment of differences of opinion. It must not be curtailed out of impatience to find quick solutions.

The institutions of the federal government require improvement but not drastic change. As Mr. Rossiter's chapter points out, the conduct of the office of the President and the presence of high-quality people in key executive departments remain principal sources of effective policy-making and administrative performance.

Changing times require that the Congress reassess its procedures. Multiple hearings upon the same issue by several committees put an undue burden upon administrative officers and legislators. Congress could be more effective by focusing its attention on the determination of broad policies. Legislation has become unduly detailed. Congressional committees and their staffs too often encroach upon the administrative function. In the interests of efficiency and economy, Congress might well experiment with an occasional bill authorizing the President to eliminate or reduce specific items, subject to reversal by concurrent resolution.

Improvement of the democratic process requires a constantly better-informed public. Mass circulation periodicals have opportunities beyond their current performance. Television, although it has improved, can do better still in communicating serious ideas. In far too many communities, newspapers are inadequate in their coverage of significant public affairs. The problem of interesting and informing mass audiences, which most media must serve, is a constant challenge. The American people remain among the best informed in the world, but their sources of information must steadily be enriched to cope with ever more complex problems.

Private interest groups exemplify the rights of assembly and petition. Thus, the functioning of pressure groups of many kinds has become a part of our democratic process. Special interest groups must operate legitimately. The program of any particular group can be opposed most effectively by the formation of a counter group. There is need for more which represent broader interests such as consumers and taxpayers.

The vastly increased demands upon the federal government require at the higher levels more public servants equal in competence and imagination to those in private business and the professions. This involves a drastic increase in their compensation. The President should be given unequivocal authority and responsibility to develop a true senior civil service, along the lines suggested in Mr. Sayre's chapter. The executive branch must also place greater emphasis on the recruiting, training, and stimulation of career employees.

Employee organizations, dealing with the executive branch on wages and conditions of work, can play a constructive part.

National, state, and local governments collaborate and share power in many domestic concerns. To ensure dispersion of power within the system without obstructing solution of pressing national problems, we must pursue the following primary objectives: enlarge local discretion, as for example in the handling of matching federal grants; increase the financial resources of state and local governments;* represent urban populations more equitably in those state legislatures where they are now under-represented; further develop limited metropolitan authorities or governments.

Shared power (in Mr. Grodzins' phrase) is the key to the miracle of effective democratic government of a vast and diverse country. Our major cities and suburban areas need to find means to coordinate numerous local governments for the solution of common problems. State and local governments are increasing their activities more rapidly than the domestic sector of the federal government. Their load will continue to grow, and their capacity to meet it must be strengthened.

4. EDUCATION

The development of the individual and the nation demand that education at every level and in every discipline be strengthened and its effectiveness enhanced. New teaching techniques must continue to be developed. The increase in population and the growing complexity of the world add urgency.

Greater resources—private, corporate, municipal, state, and federal—must be mobilized. A higher proportion of the gross national product must be devoted to educational purposes. This is at once an investment in the individual, in the democratic process, in the growth of the economy, and in the stature of the United States.

Education is primarily a responsibility of the states. They have delegated responsibility for public elementary and secondary education to local authorities, and have chartered colleges and universities. This is the firmly established pattern; it can be made to function satisfactorily to meet the needs of our vast and diverse nation.

In a few states four-fifths of the youth complete four years of high school and one-half enroll in an institution of higher education. This is a majestic accomplishment. However, in many states less than half complete four years of high school and less than twenty per cent enter college. Clearly the goal is to bring every state nearer the present standard of the best. Within the next decade at least two-thirds of the youth in every state should complete twelve years of schooling and at least one-third enter college.

* See the Additional Statement by Mr. Meany, page 29.