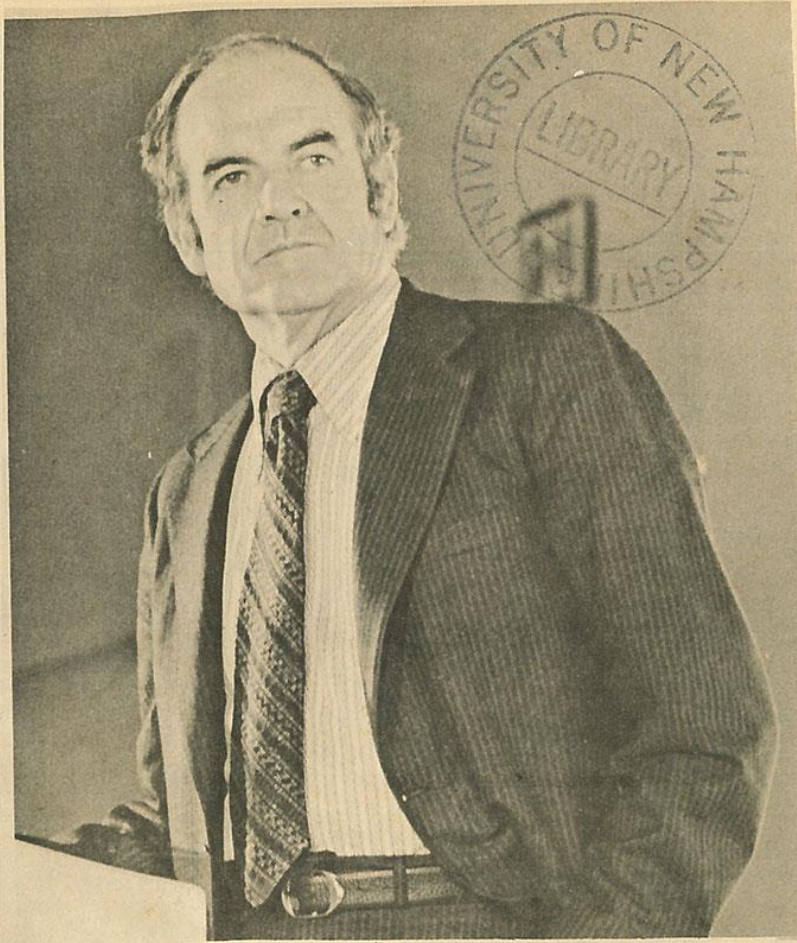


# McGovern Seeks Youth Participation in Government

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Senator George McGovern(D-S.D.) speaks before 3000 in Multi-purpose room yesterday.  
photo by Rosenblum

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## McGovern seeks youth participation in government

by Daphne Hatch

Senator George McGovern (D-S. D.), presidential hopeful, told an overflow crowd of 3000 persons yesterday afternoon the next President of the United States needs to make a "bold commitment to the involvement of young people in the decision-making process of our government."

McGovern aimed his speech at a crowd of mostly students in the Multi-purpose Room of the Memorial Union by calling for a President "who will open his heart and open his mind to the concerns and the aspirations of the young people of this country."

McGovern pointed out that in his inaugural address in 1969 President Richard Nixon cited this need to heal the generation gap and to give young people a greater role in the decision-making process. The Senator does not feel this pledge has been met and finds that "all across the country roadblocks are being thrown up by local and state political leaders, by regulations, by red tape...designed in fact to make it more difficult for people and especially young voters to participate in our electoral process."

Students are being denied the right to vote where they attend school, and some 800,000 servicemen are unable to vote where they are stationed, according to McGovern. He also noted the fact that the U.S. Attorney General says the administration is not in favor of giving students and first time voters the right



to vote in the communities where they attend college.

Also in regard to the President's pledge to heal the generation gap, McGovern's office has taken a look at the 2635 appointments Nixon has made to boards and commissions in his administration. The Senator's office found that less than four percent of the appointments have gone to persons under 30 years of age. They found that there is no one under 30 on the President's Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse, "an area in which presumably young people have some experience," said McGovern.

His office found no student or person under 30 on the Task Force on Priority in Higher Education, even though "education is an experience that falls most directly in the providence of the young." Similar situations were found on the President's Citizen's Council on Youth Opportunity, the Commission on Viet Nam Veterans and the Commission on All Volunteer Armed Forces. The one person under 30 on the Commission of Campus Unrest was publicly demanded to resign by Vice-president Spiro Agnew, according to McGovern.

In contrast to Nixon's policies, McGovern feels that the President should publicly commend communities who encourage responsible involvement by young people.



### The Federal Economy

The mountain problem of unemployment in the economic field was McGovern's next concern. The problem confronts the college graduate "as well as those not nearly so advantaged." The Senator rattled off statistics putting unemployment of the young upwards of 17 percent, more than a 50 percent increase in three years; Viet Nam veteran unemployment at a rate just under 11 percent, which is double the national average; and young blacks out of work at 40 percent.

"I think the time is long overdue for us to put our people back to work, young and old alike, instead of spending the kind of enormous sums that we are now wasting on a senseless military venture in Indochina. That money should be diverted immediately into the construction of those programs that not only create jobs for our people here at home, but could give us the public services, and the facilities in education and health and the environment that our society so desperately needs. There's work to be done and we ought to get on with that work instead of wasting our substance and our blood in immoral and senseless warfare." (Applause.)

McGovern also feels the country's leaders have failed in the area of education. He claimed that the federal budget last year allocated only \$780,000,000 to education, an average of only \$90 per student to defray the mounting costs of higher education. According to McGovern, the military budget is 35 times the size of the entire Federal education budget.

McGovern recommended one way to "convert unnecessary instruments of destruction into programs that lift the quality of our lives." That idea was to earmark the \$1 billion SST (a "snob appeal jet-set airplane") investment for some 200,000 scholarships for poor students who would not otherwise receive a higher education.

"We should reorder a national budget... which allocates about 41 percent of that entire budget to military purposes." The current national budget allocates less than seven percent to educational enterprises of all kinds, McGovern added.

### The War

Following his discussion of the U.S. military budget, the Senator went on to speak in some detail on the conflict in Southeast Asia. He pointed out that at the time of President Nixon's 1968 campaign, the President said he had a plan in mind to produce an end to the war which he would reveal after the election. Three years later, McGovern finds the war continuing. McGovern feels that an acceptable way to wind down the war is not "to allow young Americans to die in Indochina at a rate of 20 to 25 each week, while other tens of thousands are filling their veins with heroin and their minds with despair because of a war that they know has lost any purpose that it might ever have had." (Applause.)

McGovern said that as ground forces in Viet Nam are being reduced, bombing has exceeded the level reached at the height of World War II, and that this bombardment has produced 60,000 to 70,000 known amputees among the civilian population of South Viet Nam. He indicated that he does not find this as an acceptable way to end the war either.

The Pentagon's body count of Communists killed since 1965 now is at the 700,000 level, according to McGovern. "I wonder why we cannot realize that they too are human beings, that their bodies feel pain, and that their families grieve even as we do. Can we really argue that these people are better dead than Red? And who appointed us as gods to make that judgement for other people?" (Applause)

The Senator went on to say that the first action of a McGovern administration "would be to order every American out of Indochina: lock, stock and barrel." (Applause.) If he were President, McGovern said he would frankly admit to the world that the government had made a mistake in Indochina and that it would never repeat that error around the world.

According to McGovern, the task of binding the nation's wounds, and the wounds that have been opened in Southeast Asia, begins with full educational, medical and employment commitments to returning veterans. But in the tradition of Abraham Lincoln, McGovern would declare a general amnesty for those who stood up against the war by either going to jail.... McGovern's last words were drowned out by applause.

McGovern ended his speech by asking that "we put behind us the nightmare and the memories of senseless war and death and destruction and that we turn in the decade of the 1970's to a new dedication to the promise with which this nation began some 200 years ago; that we rededicate ourselves to the dream of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness, not just for the favored few and the wealthy, but for all the people of this land."



### Questions and Answers

In brief question and answer period which followed the Senator's speech, he was sked whether or not he should be considered a one-issue candidate. McGovern commented that his first and foremost interest is to end the war. However, he went on to say, "I think there have been few members of the U.S. Senate who have addressed a broader range of issues than I have." He said he was the author of legislation to put an end to hunger in the U.S., that he was a leader in the effort to convert the country's economy from a wartime to a peacetime economy, that he was known for his work with agricultural programs in his part of the country, and that he has been actively involved in conservation and environmental programs.

"On women in government, my position is in." He feels that women ought to be involved in the very highest levels of government. He promised that if he were President, the first Supreme Court opening would go to a woman. He finds a clear injustice toward women over the past 200 years of U.S. history.

The sessions last question brought agreement from McGovern that the present military pay scale system is unfair to military personnel. To achieve the volunteer army, McGovern feels that the government will have to double the pay scale of enlisted men, and pay what is necessary to secure the needed persons, and not to force them through the draft.

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