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1990
STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

As Delivered

LEON L. WILLIAMS

Chairman

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

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STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

Daughters Granddaughter and friends

Good morning board members ~~and~~ honored guests, I begin by wishing all of you a prosperous and happy new year and join you in welcoming the new decade.

I would also like to extend a welcome to the tens of thousands of San Diegans ~~Diego County citizens~~ who are joining us today through cable television. And, a special note of welcome goes out to the hearing-impaired in our community. These citizens are receiving the "State of the County" ~~message~~ thanks to Deaf Community Services, and our signer, Sarah Petrie.

Yesterday, while reflecting on the significant contributions made by Dr. Martin Luther King, I recalled him saying, "The ultimate measure of a ~~man~~ [person] is not where ~~he~~ [that person] stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where ~~he~~ [that person] stands at times of challenge and controversy." Although we are experiencing ~~such~~ a time

of controversy, with far-sighted planning and vision, we will all stand tall.

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I am proud of all the employees who are the county of San Diego. From the Chief Administrative Officer to the many county volunteers, these individuals have helped to move the County of San Diego through the hurdles of the 80's brought on by the passage of Proposition 13 and the Gann initiative, rising health care costs, tremendous population growth and the ravages of AIDS and drug abuse. Through their collective effort, the County of San Diego met and dealt with numerous challenges during these difficult times.

I am honored to serve the public with four very dedicated individuals who, since becoming members of the Board of Supervisors in the mid-1980's, have helped to re-establish county government as a regional leader.

Supervisor Golding, the immediate past Chairperson, produced operation "Re-leaf" to improve our environment by encouraging tree plantings throughout the county. Additionally, she addressed the problem of illegal disposal of medical waste. And she helped improve the county's ability to respond to major disasters.

Supervisor MacDonald, our current Vice Chairman, has persisted for three years to resolve the complex issue of siting one of the county's solid waste management facilities. The result of that effort will be realized when the Board of Supervisors addresses the siting of a landfill in North County this year. Supervisor MacDonald also initiated a Peak Hour Traffic Management plan to improve the traffic flow county-wide. ~~And, looking ahead, Supervisor MacDonald~~ And he has agreed to Chair the county's Private Industry Council/Regional Employment and Training Consortium Board. of Directors.

Supervisor Bilbray responded to the need to focus on one of San Diego's most vital resources, San Diego Bay. He initiated and secured

funding for a major health risk assessment of the bay. The results of this study will determine the extent of contamination and its effects on humans. Consistent with the Board's regional leadership thrust, Supervisor Bilbray has taken the lead in the southern part of the county to initiate two major regional park projects in the Tijuana River and Otay River Valleys.

Supervisor Bailey has consistently championed the equity funding issue. This issue focuses on the historic funding inequities between San Diego County and other California counties some of which receive far more state funding per capita than San Diego. He has also been a leader in criminal justice planning.

These are merely a few examples of the individual efforts of my fellow Supervisors. The effectiveness and success of the Board would not be nearly so great without both our individual and our collective efforts.

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We have accomplished a great deal in recent years. During the past decade, the total annual funds available to meet the host of needs of our diverse citizenry has increased from 650 million dollars to nearly 1.5 billion dollars. Although this sounds substantial, it is a **small** increase when adjusted for inflation.

Our current budget plan reflects the high priorities of public safety, health, ~~and~~ social services and community services. Over the past few years we have added over 1,000 beds within the County jail system. We provided key funding increases for the district attorney's programs related to narcotics and gang prosecution and to the Sheriff's department. We also have added 54 courtrooms. We can look with pride at improvements in health services such as Edgemoor Hospital and the construction of the new mental health hospital.

It should not go unnoticed that we successfully prevented the state from reducing indigent health care funds, and that we also pursued equity

funding from the state for drug, alcohol, and mental health programs. We established the office of Public Defender to provide improved legal assistance and we established San Diego Capitol Assets Leasing Corporation (SANCAL) to help the county fund capital projects. We are also proud of the county's Greater Avenues to Independence (GAIN) program which has received nationwide attention and been adopted by the state and federal governments. This program provides that welfare recipients receive employment training, education and childcare.

These accomplishments serve as a backdrop to a truly exciting time -- the beginning of a new decade!

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More than in previous decades, this new decade promises to alter our lives considerably. New discoveries in medicine will improve our health and extend our lives; technological advances will offer alternatives for the way we travel, work, and communicate; and scientific progress will

continue to boggle our minds as it reveals a new array of possibilities to the way we live. We all will be affected by rapid changes which promise to impact the social and economic fabric of our society.

The 1990's will be a time for us to re-examine what we do and how we do it; to take a hard look at the services we provide and the manner in which they are delivered. It has been said that "Those who promote positive change most effectively are not those who provide a new set of answers, but those who pose a new set of questions."

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A few moments ago, I spoke of a number of accomplishments of which this county can be proud. I spoke of a budget the size of which may appear to be great. Yet, we still face many enormous problems. As we move into this new decade, I am confident that I am not alone in asking the question, **"WHAT IS MISSING?"**

What is missing in San Diego County, a county that spends over $900 million a year on social service programs and yet 7,000 homeless and

hungry men, women and children struggle to survive;

What is missing, I hear you ask, in our county where over $230 million per year is spent on the criminal justice system, a system that continues to be overburdened;

What is missing in a county which spends over $160 million annually on health services, yet children, adults, and seniors go without minimal medical services such as immunizations, and perinatal care, and where those suffering from the devastating physical and financial effects of AIDS go without hospitalization and shelter?

What is missing in this county, where school systems are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on educational programs, yet those educators still battle high drop-out and failure to learn rates?

What is missing when the average unemployment rate for this county is around 4 percent, but certain communities and ethnic groups face

unemployment rates that are several times higher?

What is missing, I hear you ask, in San Diego county where we all deserve respect and understanding from one another, and yet some of us choose to deny equal opportunities and commit hate crimes against our fellow citizens solely because they are of a different race, religion, gender, age or sexual preference.

WHAT IS MISSING?

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Is it more money? Of course money is a part of every solution and this Board will continue efforts to secure San Diego County's fair share of state and federal funding. But money alone will not address all of the issues posed in the questions that you and I ask.

Is it lack of concern and involvement? I doubt it. The citizens of this

county do care. There is also tremendous dedication on the part of county staff and this Board of Supervisors.

I pose these questions today to say that the answers do not lie in any one segment of our community alone. It is my belief that the answers lie in our spirit and courage -- the spirit and courage of all of us. The consumer, provider, manager, business representative and homemaker can each be a part of ~~this~~ The solution in addressing the unmet needs of San Diego county. You each have something to offer.

Individual efforts throughout the county are truly extraordinary, and I strongly commend any person who takes the time to make San Diego county a better place to live and work. But what is missing is that which connects each of these efforts into a sensitive and comprehensive approach.

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This great nation of ours with all of its potential is experiencing a breakdown of its economic and social fabric.

We build gated communities and gated condos -- we put bars on apartments and security systems on our houses. In these ways, we are moving ~~towards~~ back to medievalism, a time when we built protective moats, and drawbridges were our only means of access.

This is not what we want in ~~this~~ our county.

We need to **include** people, not **exclude** them. Our challenge is to enable everyone to be strong economically and socially. When we accomplish this, we no longer will view each other as threatening, we will need fewer -- not more -- jail beds, and we can take down the bars that surround our homes.

We must develop a philosophy of **inclusion**, not exclusion, so that our children feel that they have a place in our society, so that they know

they are somebody. The future depends on them, and indeed, they are our future.

Governmental entities, the private sector, communities and individuals must form new partnerships and cooperative arrangements to address these issues that are tearing at the fabric of our society.

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As Chairman of the Board, know that I am committed to developing comprehensive community and county plans which address the underlying cause, not just the symptom. This farsighted approach may take longer, it is not as glamorous, but it will be more effective. I ask my colleagues to join me in this effort and I ask all of you for your support. My fundamental goal will continue to be the promotion of the kind of positive change in government that improves the quality of life of all citizens.

That is my philosophy. Now, I would like to address a few specific issues and programs that I would like to see come to fruition in the years ahead. Partnerships will be the key to their success.

At the forefront of my 1990 agenda is prevention. While some naysayers may hold the belief that the concept of prevention is idealistic and costly, we must focus our efforts **today** on the issues that threaten the quality of our lives.

San Diego County government has made significant strides in developing and implementing preventive programs in recent years. I plan to place an even greater emphasis on them. Preventive programs are already in place in the areas of services to seniors, delinquency, crime, family preservation and reunification, parent education and the G-A-I-N Program.

I call upon my colleagues to join me in increasing the focus on prevention as we develop policies, and I urge county staff to continue

the development and implementation of programs in furtherance of this focus.

With prevention as our aim, let's look at several priority issues beginning with childcare.

Right now we have a shortage of 90,000 childcare openings county-wide, and each day the demand grows. In March, I will request a board conference to clarify what local, state and federal childcare efforts are already underway. Following the hearing, we will be in a better position to make specific recommendations ~~that~~ which address the need for childcare in San Diego.

That need will be better addressed if the private sector works in partnership with public agencies to reduce or eliminate impediments to affordable, quality childcare.

Another important issue facing San Diegans today is relocating the

airport from Lindbergh Field. Lindbergh Field is not a safe airport and it is not meeting the needs of our growing region.

Now is the time for action by local officials. The airport issue has been studied and restudied by San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). We know our options and we must act. Miramar clearly is the most central and most suitable airport for the county of San Diego. We need to apply our long-range planning abilities to what truly is best for San Diego.

Supervisor Bilbray and I will write a board letter for the next Board meeting which will address the initial steps necessary to begin negotiations with our congressional delegation to use some of that space.

Another area that must be addressed more fervently now than ever before is our environment. I, like most Californians, believe that the enormity of environmental problems affects us daily. Two months ago, I

initiated a plan for the County to re-evaluate the way it uses a particular ozone-depleting chemical known as Freon. Since that time, San Diegans have rallied behind this effort, and today, the County, the Air Pollution Control District, and the City of San Diego are working in partnership to respond comprehensively to the issue of ozone depletion in San Diego. I intend to keep a watchful eye on this program and others like it so that San Diego County continues to act as a catalyst for other agencies to respond to global concerns.

As most of you know, I have always been a strong advocate of managed growth. We are at a critical point in this area. We must guarantee that as development expands in this county, it does so responsibly and that vital facilities such as child care and schools are required to grow with it. Our social fabric depends upon it.

Additionally, I would like to see a consortium of parks and recreation officials from all jurisdictions in the county work together to re-examine the County's status regarding neighborhood open space. A good

system of open space combined with recreational opportunities is known to reduce delinquency, drug abuse and gang problems by providing socializing activities as a legitimate outlet for youthful energy. Furthermore, it is one of the lowest cost prevention measures available.

Therefore, I ask that the City of San Diego and the County finalize the urban canyon program to provide recreational open space to areas of the city, which historically have been overlooked.

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As County Supervisors, we are responsible for providing the best health care services possible to our diverse communities. The lack of proper health care results in lower community productivity and hinders the economic development and progress of this entire county.

We believe that every citizen is entitled to health care, yet, we are faced with the dilemma of providing quality health care, while containing

costs. This is a complex issue and the solution will depend upon an effective partnership involving many segments of our community, both public and private.

The Perinatal Provider Network which Supervisor Bilbray and I will be presenting to the Board for their support later this month will be an example of an effective partnership. Hospitals, community clinics, private physicians and county staff will be working together to remove the barriers which inhibit women and infants from receiving needed and cost effective perinatal care.

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I am Therefore proposing that a blue ribbon task force be established to identify strategies for the investment of private and public resources to improve the quality of health care for all citizens of this county. The Task Force will be comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds and with experience in business, government, and health services.

Looking at further cost effective measures, Supervisor Baily and I intend to ask ~~my~~ our colleagues to place a measure on the June ballot which would amend the Charter to permit the Board of Supervisors to create a County Department of Corrections. There are indications that we can effect greater operating efficiencies by the creation of such a department.

Finally, I appeal to all of you to understand the impact of the Gann Limit on San Diego County. The voters approved a waiver of that limit in November 1988 which is good for only four years. By 1992 we will have exceeded the limit by an estimated $51 million. Should the voters not grant another waiver at that time, significant program reductions will have to be made. Current decisions must take cognizance of this pending reality.

Citizens will have an opportunity this June to vote on a measure of tremendous consequence to the County and the entire region. Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA) 1 passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor last year, will provide a partial solution if passed by the voters. It would change the Gann formula to more accurately reflect actual costs of living and of delivering government services.

Our task as Supervisors is twofold: 1. We must persuade the

Legislature to enact an implementation statute before June that will maximize the benefit from SCA 1; and 2. we must mobilize this community to support SCA 1 on the June ballot.

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We San Diegans care enough to make things happen. We can and will make all of these things happen, through collaboration, through approaches which **include**, not exclude people, and through a focus on **prevention**.

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I hope you all leave today recharged and resolved to participate: we know the issues, we are committed to solving them, and we have a plan.

We all know that we are living in the finest county in the country. Let us, therefore, follow the advise of William Faulkner who said in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech: "I believe that ~~man~~ [people] will not merely endure: ~~He~~ [they] must prevail." Let's prevail in the new year,

let's prevail in the new decade and let's prevail into to the next century.

Thank you all for coming.