

Chronological: Hawaii Seniors in the Information Age, Honolulu

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
Speeches, Chronological, Box SP9, Folder 86
<https://hdl.handle.net/10524/72559>

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"HAWAII'S SENIORS IN THE INFORMATION AGE"

CyR
A video-taped message for the SeniorNet
Learning Center of Hawaii

produced by Honolulu Community College for
inclusion in an exhibit at Washington, D.C.
in June 1992

ALOHA. THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF
CONCERN TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS NOT JUST IN MY HOME STATE OF
HAWAII BUT ACROSS OUR NATION AS WELL.

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS, I
AM AWARE OF THE IMPACT THE ELECTRONIC AGE HAS ON EACH AND
EVERY CITIZEN. THIS IS BECAUSE WE ARE NO LONGER AN
AGRICULTURAL OR A MANUFACTURING ECONOMY BUT A SERVICE
ECONOMY.

THIS IS TRUE FOR BOTH THE STATE OF HAWAII AND THE UNITED
STATES, WITH COMMUNICATIONS ASSUMING PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE.
ALL SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY DEPEND ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS:
WE HAVE ARRIVED AT THE STATE WHERE EVERYTHING --
PHOTOGRAPHS, INVOICES, TELEVISION PROGRAMS AND HUMAN SPEECH
-- CAN BE ENCODED AS DATA TO BE RELAYED AND MANIPULATED
THROUGH COMPUTERS.

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A WORD, NOW, ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN OUR SOCIETY. IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SAID THAT OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR BEST RESOURCE AND OUR BEST HOPE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE. I ALSO CONSIDER THOSE WHO POSSESS THE VAST BREADTH AND DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE THAT COMES WITH AGE TO BE A MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE WITH MUCH TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR COMMUNITY. WE NEED OUR SENIOR CITIZENS TO REMIND THE COMMUNITY WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND TO COUNSEL SOCIETY ON HOW FAR IT HAS TO GO TO ACHIEVE ITS GOALS. OUR CHILDREN ARE OUR IMMORTALITY. BUT IN THEIR VEINS RUNS THE BLOOD OF THEIR ELDERS WHO GAVE THEM LIFE. AND SENIOR CITIZENS . . . MYSELF INCLUDED . . . SHOULD BE THE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION, GUIDANCE AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO WILL LEAD US TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW.

I MENTIONED EARLIER THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN OUR SERVICE-ORIENTED ECONOMY. COMMUNICATION IS ALSO IMPORTANT FOR ANYONE WHO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATES IN THE AFFAIRS OF HIS COMMUNITY. COMMUNICATION FOSTERS UNDERSTANDING, AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE. THUS, THE INFORMED PERSON HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF INFLUENCING DECISIONS AND EVENTS THAT AFFECT HIS LIFE, HIS COMMUNITY AND THE FUTURE OF HIS CHILDREN.

WHEN YOU INVOLVE YOURSELF IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, YOU ARE, IN EFFECT, FULFILLING YOUR OBLIGATION AS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN. WE ARE ALL OBLIGATED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS BECAUSE, HOWEVER IMPERFECT, DEMOCRACY IS OUR WAY OF LIFE. IT IS THE SYSTEM UPON WHICH WE BASE OUR IDEALS AND OUR PRINCIPLES. AND WITHOUT OUR IDEALS AND OUR PRINCIPLES, THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL OR WORTHY TO DEFEND.

WE CAN INVOLVE OURSELVES IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IN ANY NUMBER OF WAYS. WE CAN ENGAGE IN DISCOURSE AND DEBATE IN SO-CALLED TOWN MEETINGS, MUCH AS THE EARLY SETTLERS DID AT THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY COLONY IN THE MID-1600'S. IN THOSE DAYS, ATTENDANCE WAS MANDATORY AND ABSENTEES WERE FINED. THOMAS JEFFERSON'S VIRGINIA DID NOT SUBSCRIBE TO THIS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM BUT HE NEVERTHELESS PRAISED THE TOWN MEETING AS "THE WISEST INVENTION EVER DEVISED BY THE WIT OF MAN FOR THE PERFECT EXERCISE OF GOVERNMENT."

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OF GENERAL INTEREST THIS YEAR TO ALL AMERICANS WAS THE SENATE'S PASSAGE OF WHAT IS CONSIDERED THE NUMBER ONE CONSUMER BILL BEFORE THE CONGRESS THIS YEAR -- THE CABLE TELEVISION CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 1991. THIS BILL, WHICH I COSPONSORED, PROPOSES TO SCALE BACK EXCESSIVE CABLE RATES AND PROMOTE COMPETITION IN THE CABLE INDUSTRY.

I HAVE ALSO PUSHED FOR A NATION-WIDE STUDY ON WHETHER TO GRANT TAX BREAKS TO THOUSANDS WHO LIVE ON LEASE LAND.

I AM HEARTENED TO SEE OUR ELDERLY -- THE "NA KUPUNA" -- CONTINUE TO TAKE SUCH AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE AFFAIRS OF OUR GOVERNMENT. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS MOST WELCOME, AND MOST URGENT. AS A SENIOR CITIZEN MYSELF -- I CAN ATTEST TO THE WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY OF SENIORS TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR SOCIETY. WHEN WE COMBINE OUR SKILLS, WISDOM AND OUR ENERGY WE CAN MEET ANY CHALLENGE, AND SECURE ANY GOAL. I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY. ALOHA.

DANIEL K. INOUE
HAWAII

APPROPRIATIONS
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense

COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION
Chairman, Subcommittee on Communications

Chairman, SELECT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN
AFFAIRS

Chairman, DEMOCRATIC STEERING COMMITTEE

Member, COMMITTEE ON RULES AND
ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

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April 1, 1992

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Mr. Jon H. Blumhardt, Director
Educational Media Center
Honolulu Community College
874 Dillingham Boulevard
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Dear Jon:

As we discussed yesterday on the phone, I have forwarded the videotaped remarks of Senator Inouye to you, along with a script. The tape runs about 6 1/2 minutes, so you will have to edit to fit your needs. If a problem should ever develop, I have a 1/2 inch VHS back-up tape in our library here.

As a reminder, you should forward to me as soon as you can the information we will need to take delivery of your equipment here at the Capitol. This should be the name(s) of those delivering same and what is to be delivered. I have just been informed that if you should need the space, the conference room's anteroom is available.

Looking forward to the conference in June. Take care.

Aloha,



NESTOR R. GARCIA
Press Secretary to
Daniel K. Inouye
United States Senator

DKI:ngc
Enclosures

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