

WELFARE OF CHILDREN

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M E S S A G E

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

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FEBRUARY 8, 1967.—Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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*To the Congress of the United States:*

In 1905, this Nation hummed with industrial growth—and Jane Addams discovered a boy of 5 working for a living by night in a cotton mill.

Thirteen percent of the laborers then in the cotton trade were child laborers. All across the Nation, in glass factories, in mines, in canneries, and on the streets, more than 2 million children under 16 worked—full time.

Slowly, what Theodore Roosevelt called “public sentiment, with its corrective power” stirred and raised a cry for action.

“The interests of this Nation,” President Roosevelt declared to Congress in 1909, “are involved in the welfare of children no less than in our great national affairs.”

By 1912, the Federal Children’s Bureau was established. The long battle to end child labor moved toward victory. Congress had pledged its power to the care and protection of America’s young people.

Upon that pledge, the Congress, the executive branch and the States have built public policy—and public programs—ever since.

In the past 3 years, I have recommended and you in the Congress have enacted legislation that has done more for our young people than in any other period in history:

Headstart and other preschool programs are providing learning and health care to more than 2 million children.