

**REMARKS BY SENATOR CHARLES PERCY  
FIFTH CITY'S ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
Chicago, Illinois  
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There is a poem called *A Dream Deferred*. A line in that poem, if I can remember it, is: "When a dream is deferred, does it sag like a heavy load . . . or does it just explode?" The question about whether or not alot of men's and women's dreams have ever come true is answered in Fifth City.

At one time this was an area of tremendous despair. Yet today is a day of great nostalgia for myself and I know for Loraine. When I was defeated for Governor 15 years ago we founded an organization called the New Illinois Committee, and among the things we started was a program called *Call for Action* which is still a very important program in our city of Chicago. We came out to the 29th Ward, Loraine, Valerie and Sharon, our daughters, myself, and my mother, Elizabeth Percy, with her violin. We opened up a neighborhood center with the help of a great many people from the business and banking community and that neighborhood center was a forerunner of Operation Headstart in Chicago—a year ahead of it. We had 50 children in a headstart program; we counseled their parents. We got to know the area now known as Fifth City very well indeed as we worked out here and I just want to pay tribute to Loraine for all the work she did with our children at that time and the wonderful people in the community who worked with us.

There came along an organization not called the CIA but the ICA and it's not at all controversial. I don't know anyone who's ever said anything against it. It's the Institute of Cultural Affairs and it had an idea. It saw that despair could be dealt with. It saw that what you needed to do was to work with and listen to the community and *not* have something come from the top to be imposed down on it, because just showering a community with money doesn't work. I've seen it just go to utter waste and confusion many, many times. What is needed is local leadership and then a greater community of concerned people. I wonder if all the men and women from business, labor and the banking community who are here today who have taken an interest in Fifth City would just stand along with Tom Coulter, Jim Kemper and George Meyers. Let's have them all stand up and give them a big hand.

I want to certify that I lived in the Chicago business community for 25 years as a businessman and now I live in the heart of Washington, D.C. It's vital that those of us who can help the cities show that we give a damn about the cities and the people here today have for years shown that they give a damn. The Chicago Association of Commerce & Industry has for years dedicated itself to building every part of this city; not just the Gold Coast and not the suburbs but every part of this city, and its President is right here today. Our banks care about the city. But what they had to have was a spirit. They had to make an investment in the human resources that also care about their own community. And that is what is so unique here.

That is why Fifth City, in its fifteenth year of celebration today from the conception of an idea is now important in 20 countries and important in communities across the nation. We had problems of burned out buildings, unemployment, skyrocketing crime, transiency in the neighborhood, and utter despair. Now we have replaced those words with growing employment, more investment, more fine people coming in, buildings that are being fixed up, and an area of the city with a future that has been created by the Iron Man. And let me tell you, I've been ten feet tall since a few months ago a group of Fifth City's leaders came into my office and made me an Iron Man. Everytime any group from anyplace comes into my office there are two things I show them: the picture of our grandchildren and the Iron Man. It gives me a great chance to tell them about the spirit of Fifth City.

A year ago I came out here and planted a garden in one of the vacant lots. As Bill will remember, the oldsters and youngsters all came out to help me. We planted tomatoes, beans and lettuce and we bought fencing from Montgomery Wards. I am proud to say that not one item from that garden was stolen. It just goes to show that the community spirit which is present today was present then and it is an honor for me to share it with you now.

Fifth City is a living example of how this can all work, so let's get behind the new projects and help this dream to grow. The private and public sector cooperation needs to continue.

Again, I am proud of your success and honored that, at least in a small way, I can associate myself with it. You have become a ray of hope for many people throughout the world.

And we thank you for it.