



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1978

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and is now seriously weakening the historic civil rights coalition in the United States Senate." And in a major speech following the vote, he expressed:

"How shameful it is that on the verge of our Bicentennial celebration, the United States Senate was willing to deny American school children their constitutional rights. And how hypocritical it is that the great civil rights coalition in the Senate begins to weaken in direct proportion to the number of court orders in various northern cities."

While the Senate did vote to limit the authority of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to require busing, Brooke and his allies have been defeating harsher attempts to interfere with the independence of the Judiciary. But the work is difficult and lonely. Indeed, Brooke's role has been so courageous and so dominating that it has caused one Senator, George McGovern (D-South Dakota), to lament on the Senate floor that too many Senators were abdicating[[abdicating]] their responsibilities and letting Ed Brooke fight the tough battles all alone.

The same fervor that characterizes Brooke's commitment[[commitment]] to equal educational opportunity to Americans in all fields of endeavor. His leadership has been instrumental in the enactment of legislation to protect the fundamental rights of women, the aged, the handicapped, and all those who have been unjustly discriminated against.

And Senator Ed Brooke is truly an urban advocate. During a Banking Committee hearing on the New York City financial crisis, he said:

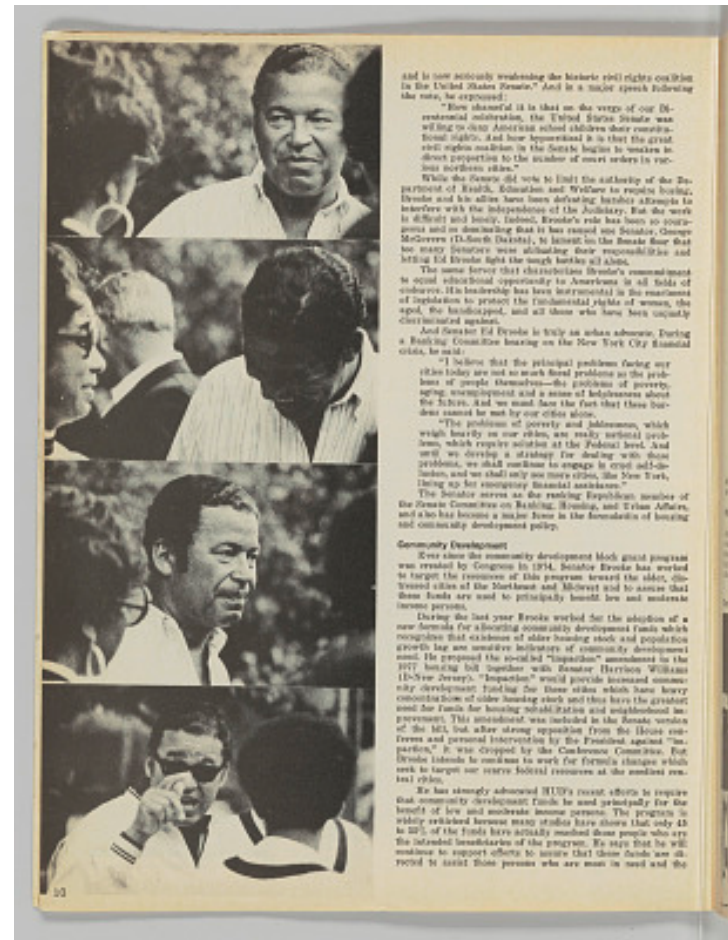
"I believe that the principal problems facing our cities today are not so much fiscal problems as the problems of people themselves—the problems of poverty, aging, unemployment and a sense of helplessness about the future. And we must face the fact that these burdens cannot be met by our cities alone.

"The problems of poverty and joblessness, which weigh heavily on our cities, are really national problems, which require solution at the Federal level. And until we develop a strategy for dealing with these problems, we shall continue to engage in cruel self-delusion and we shall only see more cities, like New York, lining up for emergency financial assistance."

The Senator serves as the ranking Republican member of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, and also has become a major force in the formulation[[formulation]] of housing and community development policy.

Community Development

Ever since the community development block grant program was created by Congress in 1974, Senator Brooke has worked to target the resources of this program toward the older, distressed cities of the Northeast and Midwest and to assure that these funds are used to principally benefit low and moderate income persons.



During the last year Brooke worked for the adoption of a new formula for allocating community development funds which recognizes that existence of older housing stock and population growth lag are sensitive indicators of community development need. He proposed the so-called "impaction" amendment to the 1977 housing bill together with Senator Harrison Williams (D-New Jersey). "Impaction" would provide increased community development funding for those cities which have heavy concentrations of older housing stock and thus have the greatest need for funds for housing rehabilitation and neighborhood improvement. This amendment was included in the Senate version of the bill, but after strong opposition from the House conferees and personal intervention by the President against "impaction," it was dropped by the Conference Committee. But Brooke intends to continue to work for formula changes which seek to target our scarce federal resources at the neediest central cities.

He has strongly advocated HUD's recent efforts to require that community development funds be used principally for the benefit of low and moderate income persons. The program is widely criticized because many studies have shown that only 45 to 55% of the funds have actually reached those people who are the intended beneficiaries of the program. He says that he will continue to support efforts to assure that these funds are directed to assist those persons who are most in need and the

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