

Lyndon Baines Johnson, "War on Poverty"

a Black Out Poem by Matthew Dunne

Many Americans live
On the outskirts of hope
Because of poverty
Because of color

Our task:
To replace despair with opportunity

Unconditional war on poverty:
We will not rest until that war is won,
Won in the field,
In every private home,
In every public office,
From the courthouse to the White House

Our chief weapons:
Better schools,
Better health,
Better homes,
Better opportunities
To help more Americans
Escape from squalor
And misery

Our effort must pursue poverty
Pursue it wherever it exists—
In city slums
And small towns,
In sharecropper shacks
Or migrant worker camps,
On Indian reservations,
In the boom towns,
In depressed areas

[Our effort must]

Relieve
Cure
Prevent
Launch
Expand
Enact
Work
Distribute
Create
Modernize
Extend
Improve
Build
Train
Provide
Protect
Give
Help
Seek
Obtain
Release

Not for the underprivileged alone

Every American will benefit
Every American community will benefit
From a nation that is free from want
And a world of peace and justice
[A world of] freedom and abundance
For our time
And for all time to come