

RADIO ADDRESS BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF MINNEAPOLIS,
PREPARED FOR DELIVERY OVER WTCN, THURSDAY, MAY 31, 1945, 6:30 P.M.

It has been stated again and again ⁱⁿ the newspapers of our city that the present mayoralty campaign would be waged with full vigor and, as they put it, would be a "hot one".

One of the thrills and joys of political life is its competitive nature and the opportunity of argument, pro and con. American politics has been known for its free discussions and its open forum methods. We believe in the right of free speech. We believe in the right of freedom of assemblage. Without these fundamental beliefs political life in a democratic sense would not be possible.

I have mentioned a number of times about the nature of this campaign. I have said that whispers, slander and personal insults too often have overshadowed the real issues in our municipal elections. I told you that I am not willing to be a party to such a campaign and I have asked my supporters to conduct themselves on a high level of intellectual honesty and decency.

It is becoming increasingly apparent, however, that there are those in this community who are unwilling to adhere to such a set of rules.

Already the mayor of this city has seen fit to enter upon a campaign of slander, half-truths and deliberate distortion of fact. Already a scare campaign is under way -- a campaign to frighten the people of Minneapolis into a belief that sinister forces are at work in my behalf.

I have had the opportunity of reading my opposition's campaign literature and I can honestly say that it approaches the lowest level of political tactics I have ever witnessed. Of course,

I am not an old hand at politics. I do not have the counsel and advice of those who are past masters at political trickery and the art of mud slinging. The Humphrey for Mayor Volunteer Committee is composed of people from all walks of life in our community -- many people who never before participated in a political campaign. They are in this campaign not to malign the character of other people, not to spread rumor and falsehood but to support a program which they believe will revitalize the government of this city.

I have discussed with you some of the powers and responsibilities of the mayor's office. I have called your attention to the fact that the office of mayor of this city is not without authority. The mayor has complete supervision over the police department. He has appointment power to the Civil Service Commission, the City Planning Commission and the Board of Public Welfare.

He is a member of nearly all the boards and commissions of this city. He is in a position to bring to the attention of these boards and agencies his program and his policies pertaining to our municipal government. He can be and should be in constant touch with our City Council. His office can and should serve as a clearing house for community planning and community redevelopment.

However, if the mayor is to exert leadership, if he is to present a program to the respective boards and commissions of which he is a member, his attendance at the meetings of these governmental agencies is imperative. Yet an examination of the minutes of the meetings of the boards and commissions reveals the striking fact that the mayor has been repeatedly absent -- not just occasionally but constantly.

Of four very important boards and commissions, namely the Board of Estimate and Taxation, the Library Board, the Park Board and the City Planning Commission, the present mayor of this city has been absent, on the whole, over 65% of the time. To be absent from the deliberations of the City Planning Commission 70% of the time, from the Park Board 60% of the time, the Board of Estimate and Taxation almost 50% of the time and from the Library Board 90% of the time, is not giving leadership to the government of the City of Minneapolis.

The mayor would have us believe that he cannot set in motion programs of action because of his position in our form of city government. He complains about the Charter. Yet for 12 long years he has been a member of our city government and to this date has not given leadership to any concerted or planned program of charter reform or reorganization.

His only suggestion as to Charter reform has been to relieve himself of the responsibility of law enforcement by placing the Chief of Police under Civil Service. Rather than ask for more responsibility, rather than ask to coordinate and integrate the machinery of government, the present mayor of this city has suggested that he be relieved of all responsibility of law enforcement without any positive program in reference to the rest of the Charter.

It is always easy to make rationalizations for inaction and lack of courage. This is no time for weak apologies. This is no time for wishful thinking. The mayor of this city, by the very letter of the law has a legal obligation for leadership. By the spirit of the law he has a moral responsibility for the common welfare.

Any position or job can be a dull or unimportant one if the individual wishes to make it so. Any office or position can be made to one of importance or strength if the occupant has the initiative, the imagination and the capacity to make it so.

I repeat -- the mayor of this city can be an official with influence and prestige. It is therefore most unfortunate that the present mayor has been unwilling or unable to exert the powers placed by Charter and law in his possession. The mayor of this city could and should take a leading position in the promotion of industrial peace and understanding between the forces of capital and labor.

Minneapolis cannot afford the extravagance and waste of lock-outs and strikes. The victory of peace will require even more cooperation between labor and management than the military victory. Our production schedule of tanks, airplanes and guns during war time must be converted into a peace time schedule of homes, automobiles, refrigerators and other goods.

There will be neither free labor nor private enterprise if the disaster of inflation and unemployment falls upon us in the post-war world. Never before have business and labor had so much in common. The day is fast approaching when Minneapolis labor and Minneapolis industry must and will unite in a program of post-war reconstruction.

Just as the three great national leaders of business and labor have outlined a charter of industrial peace on a national level, so the mayor of this city should provide leadership in obtaining similar pledges of good faith and cooperation from local business management and labor organizations.

I am particularly interested in this matter because I am the candidate endorsed by the three great sections of organized labor in this city. Three great sections of organized labor that have not participated in a single strike during war time. The American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the Railroad Brotherhoods. These organizations represent 70,000 workers in Minneapolis. They not only wish to see a city that has a clean

and efficient administration but they fully appreciate the importance of jobs for themselves and profit for business.

I am particularly interested in labor-management cooperation. I come from a business family -- my father having been in business for the past forty years. I have a host of friends in Minneapolis business. Many of these men are members of my Volunteer Committee and are actively supporting my candidacy and program. They do not want to go back to a period that produced strife and trouble. They wish to see a mayor elected who has the confidence of labor and the respect of business so that he can be helpful in promoting better understanding and cooperation.

I have said to labor and business groups that I am the candidate of no special interest. That, when elected, I will not be labor's mayor, the mayor of business nor the mayor of any particular group. I intend to be and shall be the mayor of the whole city -- the mayor of the people of Minneapolis. This is the type of mayor labor wants. This is the type of mayor business wants. I am fully aware of the public trust and responsibility that will be placed in me as mayor of your city. One is not worthy of the respect and confidence of this community if he becomes the pawn of any special interest. We have had too much of special privilege for special interest.

This evening I wish to call to your attention the deplorable condition of our city financial structure and the obvious failure of the mayor to do anything constructive to remedy this situation during the four years he has been in office. Our city is in debt over \$50,000,000. Last year our city operated on a deficit of approximately \$800,000. It is important that the people of Minneapolis be informed of these facts about our city government.

The present mayor, who is a member of the Board of Estimate and Taxation and who, under the terms of the Charter, can review the reports and accounts of any office of our city has never brought our fiscal problems out into the open. During the recent legislative session the present mayor failed to provide any real leadership in securing action leading to a solution of our cities critical financial problem. Now that the legislative session is over and the present mayor's campaign for re-election is under way, he suddenly comes to life and demands a survey.

The present mayor has had four years to study this problem. He had had four years to bring our financial difficulties to the attention of our people. He has had four years to talk with the governor and legislative leaders. He has had four years to work with mayors of other municipalities in order to mobilize their strength behind a wellplanned program directed towards the solution of municipal financial matters.

There have been three legislative sessions since the present mayor entered office. He has had more than ample time to consult with our governor and our legislative leaders.

The present mayor should know also that for the last six years the League of Minnesota Municipalities has been engaged in a most exhaustive survey of the problems of city finances. He should know that its findings could be used as a basis for a thorough-going program of modern taxation and tax-sharing that would go a long way in solving the problem.

The League's studies are so complete that there is no need for further exhaustive study and had the mayor familiarized himself with these studies he could have presented our cities problem to the regular legislative sessions of 1943 and 1945 or to the special session called in 1944.

Isn't it amazing that even at this late date, after four years in office, the mayor has no program to present for the solution of our financial difficulties? He talks about the need for a survey which means that the legislative session of 1947 may consider the proposal for a survey and by 1949 the legislature then may begin actual consideration of the proposals produced by the survey.

The mayor ought to learn that publicity alone will accomplish nothing. It is doing things that counts. Letters to the governor and stories to the press will never solve this problem. It is doing things that counts.

If the post-war program which has been outlined and planned for the city of Minneapolis by either myself or my opponent or by the Planning Commission is to be carried out and realized, then our city must have additional revenue. We cannot afford to increase taxes upon real estate or personal property. Already our city is over-burdened with this sort of taxation. May I say in passing that I have heard again and again that my opposition in this campaign is attempting to frighten home owners and business men by saying that if I should be elected mayor, taxes would go sky high. Taxes are already sky high. My ambition and desire in government is not to increase taxes but to see them substantially lowered. This can only be done in our city if we are to receive our fair share of state revenues.

I pledge to the people of Minneapolis that I will look upon this responsibility as one of the major tasks. I know that it can be done because it has been successfully carried out in other states. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has been able to receive approximately \$6,000,000 per year as its share of Wisconsin state revenues. I believe that people in the farm areas as well as the cities are fair minded and are willing to see the other man's problem.

city needs

It is imperative that the mayor join with responsible civic leaders in launching a campaign of education and information as well as political action to assure our city that in the next legislative session we will have more sympathetic understanding and treatment by our friends and neighbors from the rural areas.

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It is imperative that the mayor join with responsible civic leaders in launching a campaign of education and information as well as political action to assure our city that in the next legislative session we will have more sympathetic understanding and treatment by our friends and neighbors from the rural areas.

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With the present mayor, it has always been "too little and too late". Too little law enforcement and too late to apprehend the culprits. Too little support for housing programs and too late to be sincere. Too little cooperation with our legislature, and too late to count. Always and always, through four years -- too little and too late.

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The mayor ought to learn that ^{publicity alone} ~~talk~~ will accomplish nothing. It is doing things that counts. Letters to the governor and stories to the press will never solve this problem. It is doing things that counts.

~~Conflicts have been permitted to develop between the urban and rural sections of the state. The mayor of this city should have long ago recognized it as his duty and responsibility to go out into the state and talk to the people of the smaller communities and to visit with farm leaders and community leaders in the rural areas about our mutual problems.~~

~~I say it is a challenge because,~~ If the post-war program which has been outlined and planned for the city of Minneapolis by either myself or my opponent or by the Planning Commission is to be carried out and realized, then our city must have additional revenue. We cannot afford to increase taxes upon real estate or personal property. Already our city is over-burdened with this sort of taxation. May I say in passing that I have heard again and again that my opposition in this campaign is attempting to frighten home owners and business men by saying that if I should be elected mayor, taxes would go sky high. Taxes are already sky high. My ambition and desire in government is not to increase taxes but to see them substantially lowered. This can only be done in our city if we are to receive our fair share of state revenues.

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It is imperative that the mayor join with responsible civic leaders in launching a campaign of education and information as well as political action to assure our city that in the next legislative session we will have more sympathetic understanding and treatment by our friends and neighbors from the rural areas.

Let us face the facts. Under present conditions, reapportionment in our legislature is a remote possibility. Our financial problems, our problems of taxation must be met in the same manner in which the great national and international problems of unity and understanding are determined.

It will do no good to chastize and criticize those persons who represent the smaller communities and the rural areas. We have no right to distrust their sincerity. A city that has permitted itself to suffer from the publicity of lax law enforcement throughout the state cannot expect favorable consideration for its claims in a legislature that has a predominance of rural representation.

It becomes our task to meet this situation with realistic and practical measures. Two years from now another legislature will be in session. The intervening period should be used for a concerted and well-planned program of information and education. There must be a unity of effort on the part of every group in our city.

I am confident that we can bring a better understanding between urban and rural representatives because I have talked before and visited with many farm groups and leaders. They are splendid people. They are intelligent citizens. They want to know the facts and they want to enjoy the fellowship that comes with understanding.

The mayor of this city should join with civic leaders to mobilize immediately our forces and go to the people with our problems. Surely, if we believe in the value of public education, if our belief in democracy is meaningful, then we can trust the ultimate fair-mindedness and wisdom of the people.

I pledge to the people of Minneapolis that I will look upon this responsibility as one of the major tasks. I know that it can be done because it has been successfully carried out in other states. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has been able to receive approximately \$6,000,000 per year as its share of Wisconsin state revenues. I believe that people in the farm areas as well as the cities are fair minded and are willing to see the other man's problem. X.

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Always and always, through four years -- too little and too late. ~~The latest example being the decision on the part of our legislature to take Minnesota off war time. Governor Thye states the issue clearly. He said, and I quote, "action should have been taken when the legislature was in session, instead of waiting until the legislature adjourned." The mayor of this city, as the governor points out, knew the bill was under consideration and protests should have been made while the measure was in process of being enacted. Again too little -- again too late.~~

There are those who spread rumor. There are those who deliberately lie. I will not fight with these weapons. The only answer to a lie is the truth. And so I say to those who actively support my candidacy, I want you to be forthright, to be informed about city issues, to have your facts correct, and to believe sincerely in our program.

~~Last week~~ ^{have} I discussed with you some of the powers and responsibilities of the mayor's office. I ^{have} called your attention to the fact that the office of mayor of this city is not without authority. The mayor has complete supervision over the police department, and he has appointment power to the Civil Service Commission, the City Planning Commission, and the Board of Public Welfare.

He is an ~~ex-officio~~ member of nearly all the boards and commissions of this city. He is in a position to bring to the attention of these boards and agencies his program and his policies pertaining to our municipal government. He can be and should be in constant touch with our City Council. His office can and should serve as a clearing house for community planning and community redevelopment. (X)

Any position or job can be dull or unimportant if the individual wishes to make it so. Any office or position can be one of importance or strength if the occupant has the initiative, the imagination, and the capacity to make it so.

I repeat, the mayor of this city can be an official with influence and prestige. It is, therefore, most unfortunate that the present mayor of this city has been unwilling or unable to exercise the powers placed by charter and law in his position.

The mayor of this city can and should take a leading position in the promotion of industrial peace and ~~the promotion of~~ understanding between the forces of capital and labor. Minneapolis cannot afford the extravagances and waste of lock-outs and strikes. Just as the three great national leaders of business and labor have outlined a charter of industrial peace, so the mayor of this city should provide leadership in obtaining similar pledges of good faith and cooperation from local business management and labor organizations.

I am particularly interested in this matter because I am a candidate endorsed by the three great sections of organized labor in this city-- the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and the Railroad Brotherhoods.

I want it clearly understood that I am the candidate of no special interest and that when elected I will not be labor's mayor, the mayor of business, nor the mayor of any particular group. I am community-minded and I am aware of the public trust and responsibility that will be placed in me as mayor. That is the type of mayor labor wants. That is the type of mayor business wants.

One is not worthy of the respect and confidence of this community if he becomes a pawn of any special interest-- whether it is business, labor, or the rackets.

XI I plan, when elected, to inaugurate a regular series of radio programs directed to the citizens of Minneapolis in which I will discuss the problems of our municipal government and the programs and plans of our various boards and commissions.

I will give particular attention to the City Planning Commission and to the problems of our library, recreational, and welfare agencies. From time to time it will be necessary to discuss financial matters and to inform the public about the financial status of our city and the programs and plans which we will undertake in the post-war period.

A mayor of Minneapolis who is sincerely interested in the welfare and the future of our city will want an informed public. The mayor can and should serve as a public relations officer between the city government and the electorate.

In this respect the present mayor has failed. He has refused to take the people into his confidence. The mayor's office is our house of mystery.

Another important way in which the mayor can and should serve our community is by working closely with the agencies of federal and state government. We know that the pattern of government in America is one of ever closer relationships

between federal, state, and local levels of government.

Minneapolis pays a great deal in taxes to both state and national treasuries. We should make sure that we receive our fair share of the grants, subsidies, and allotments which are provided for cities of our size under state and federal law. In order that this be accomplished we need a mayor who can deal effectively with the officials in Washington and in our state capital.

We have heard much about centralization of authority and power in the hands of the federal government and this can be a real danger. It is, therefore, extremely important that we become ardent champions of efficient and dynamic local government.

To permit disintegration and deterioration of local government is to invite centralized power on a state and national level.

~~The recent session of the State Legislature focused attention~~
As our state legislative session comes to an end, we in Minneapolis are acutely aware of one aspect of this problem, namely our relationship with the state government.

This relationship involves conflicts that have been permitted to develop between the urban and rural sections of the state. The mayor of this city should have long ago recognized it as his duty and responsibility to go out into the state and talk to the people of the smaller communities and to visit with farm leaders and community leaders in the rural areas about our mutual problems.

In each legislative session Minneapolis is denied its just claims. We are facing an ever-growing problem of finances and taxation. Every effort to obtain our proportionate share from state revenues has been defeated. I call this a challenge which cannot be ignored. XXX insert

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I pledge to the people of Minneapolis that I will look upon this responsibility as one of my major tasks. I know it can be done because I believe that people in the farm areas as well as the cities are fair-minded and are willing to see the other man's problems.

Let us face the facts. Under present conditions, reapportionment in our legislature is a remote possibility. Our financial problems, our problems of taxation must be met in the same manner in which the great national and international problems of unity and understanding are determined.

Surely, if we can promote a spirit of understanding and cooperation between the members of the United Nations on an international level, we must be capable of creating a spirit of understanding and fair-mindedness between the rural and urban areas in the state of Minnesota.

It will do no good to chastize and criticize those persons who represent the smaller communities and the rural areas. We have no right to distrust their sincerity. A city that has permitted itself to suffer from the publicity of lax law enforcement throughout the state cannot expect favorable consideration for its claims in a legislature that has a predominance of rural representation.

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Already great strides have been made by such organizations as the Junior Association of Commerce, the organized labor movement, the Civic and Commerce Association, and the many business and professional associations. We have a common bond with other citizens in this state. We have fellow Rotarians, fellow Kiwanians, fellow Lions, fellow fraternal members in every city and village in Minnesota.

The mayor of this city should join with civic leaders to mobilize immediately our forces and go to the people with our problems. Surely, if we believe in the value of public education, if our belief in democracy is meaningful, then we can trust the ultimate fair-mindedness and wisdom of the people. (2)

Mothers and fathers in the smaller cities and rural areas know that many of their sons and daughters will come to the city. They are not going to be unfair in their attitude, if they come to understand the interdependence between the urban and rural sections.

We have a type of isolationism here which has never been properly analyzed. All too often we have called those persons isolationists who do not see the relationship of our nation to the affairs of other nations.

But isolationism is not limited to a debate between nationalism and internationalism. Isolationism is real when any group of citizens in any area refuses to recognize that the problems of one area fundamentally affects the health, welfare, and security of another area.

I am confident that we can bring a better understanding between urban and rural representatives because I have talked before and visited with many farm groups and leaders. They are splendid people. They are intelligent citizens. They want to know the facts and they want to enjoy the fellowship that comes with understanding. (1)

End
The people of this city and state can have a great future. Minneapolis can and should play a major role in the attainment of that future. We owe it to ourselves and our neighbors to create a unity that will guarantee the fulfillment of our share in a new and better world.



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