

Address by Hubert H. Humphrey

D. F. L.
Campaign
Speeches

I speak to my friends and neighbors in the Third Congressional District. I address my remarks to persons of all political faiths, whether they be Republican, Democrat, Farmer-Labor, or independent voters. I speak in behalf of my friend and a fellow public servant, Mr. Roy Wier, who is the candidate of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor ~~Party~~ Party for Congress in the Third Congressional District.

I have watched with ever-increasing interest the progress of this campaign. As a voter in this district, I have a particular interest in the person who will represent me and my neighbors in the Congress of the United States. The people of the Third Congressional district represent every walk of life. We are literally a little United Nations all by ourselves. The Third District is composed predominantly of farmers and working men, along with small merchants and professional people. Our district is so typically American it has always been referred to as a progressive section of the State of Minnesota and was always in the forefront of support for our late governor Floyd B. Olson and our great war-time President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The third district is progressive and liberal in its political complexion. It ~~is~~ has only strayed from the path of liberalism when the progressive forces were disunited but today we stand shoulder to shoulder as liberal and progressive Americans behind the candidacy of Roy Wier.

I wonder if you know Roy Wier as well as I do. Permit me to just give a brief account of his work as a private citizen and as a public official.

Mr. Wier has engaged in the highly honorable occupation of working in behalf of the interests of the laboring men and women of Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota. Yes, he is a member and a significant factor in the American Federation of Labor. A labor movement which is as much a part of the American way of life as our representative institutions of government. Roy Wier is known for being a fair and honest. He is respected by business men. He is admired by the working people and ~~is~~ he is trusted by ~~those who have had negotiations with him~~ all who know him.

Roy Wier is a veteran of ~~the~~ World War I. He is affiliated with veterans organizations. Roy Wier has served the people of the 29th legislative district ~~and the legislature~~ in the legislature of the State of Minnesota. He was one of those ~~wh~~ upon whom our late governor Floyd B. Olson depended. He was always known for his understanding attitude of not only the problems of labor but the problems of management and of business. During those days of the depression he supported every piece of farm legislation presented in behalf of the farmers of Minnesota. During those dark days of insecurity Roy Wier as a legislator worked for and voted for and fought for liberal and humanitarian measures of social security.

A new call to public service came to Roy Wier in 1939 when men and women of Minneapolis interested in our school system decided that something has to be done immediately to check the disintegration and retrogression of public education in this community. Roy Wier was called into public service. He was elected as a member of the School Board of the City of Minneapolis and he began his tireless and effective battle for the modernization and revitalizing of our school system. He was ~~the first~~ one of the first to lead the way in saving Minneapolis schools and in protecting the school children of Minneapolis from a breakdown in our educational system. Roy Wier has served ever since 1939 as a member

of the school board and he has consistently supported the progress policies of school administration of our superintendent, Mr. Willard Goslin.

In the municipal election of 1945 I worked closely with Roy Wier. He was supported by people from every area of our community, business, professional, educators, laborers, school-teachers, yes-- he was supported by an overwhelming majority of the electorate and was accorded one of the greatest votes ever given in a municipal election for public office.

Roy Wier, your candidate for congress, has assisted me in my municipal administration. He has served on the mayor's law enforcement committee and has stood as a consistent supporter of honest and impartial law enforcement. He was one of the first to champion the appointment of our recent superintendent of police, Ed Ryan, whom the voters of Hennepin county will elect as sheriff next Tuesday. ~~Roy Wier supported Ed Ryan when there were no other candidates for the position.~~

This is a brief sketch of the public service ~~of Roy Wier~~ record of Roy Wier, the Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidate for Congress in the Third District.

In this political campaign, as in others, there is a good deal of misrepresentation and distortion of fact. To be quite frank, there is a good deal of rumor-- a vicious rumor, if your please-- intended to undermine the character and good name of a candidate. There is no place in American politics for this sort of political activity. ~~Let's remember the old adage~~ ~~little minds talk about people, mediums~~ Candidates for political office that pick pit group against group, nationality against nationality, religion against religion, are unworthy of public support. It is time that people demanded a code of ethics from their politicians and demanded a free and frank discussion of issues, not personalities.

I want it clearly understood that I have the highest regard for Mr. Wier's opponent in this campaign. I am sure that Mr. Wier concurs with me

x in this statement. Our differences are not of a personal nature. My support of Mr. Wier is based upon his political philosophy and his treatment of the issues and his program. I support Roy Wier because he supports the liberal and progressive program so well advanced by Franklin D. Roosevelt on a national level and so ably conceived on a state level by the late governor, Floyd Olson.

Let me state my political philosophy, because ~~this is the~~ I know this to be the philosophy of Roy Wier. Besides that, you have the right to know the attitudes of the person who is talking to you. I am a member of the Democratic party. I have been, as you know, active in Democratic-Farmer-Labor politics in the state of Minnesota. I have spent several years in the study of political science and economics. Those years of study and my practical experience in public office have reaffirmed my faith in free political and economic institutions.

Let me put it this way: I am unalterably opposed to any philosophy of government which leads to the regimentation of the individual, whether ~~it be~~ that regimentation be political or economic, whether it be fascist or communist. I am equally opposed to a dictatorship of the right or the left. I just don't like dictatorship. Nor do I stand in political agreement with any person or group that would undermine our political system. Roy Wier believes this way with all the sincerity at his command.

But I do stand shoulder-to-shoulder with those who are dedicating their efforts towards making ~~the~~ democracy work, towards making American government responsive to the needs of our people. I stand with those persons who understand that our government is the instrumentality of the people and that our government should be used as a means of assisting and helping the people. I stand with those persons who have the vision to see that a democracy must be every moving forward, that a democratic people must give leadership to the rebuilding of a war-torn world, and that a democratic people must and should elect representatives to public office who believe in the

ability of people to govern themselves and who can represent the people because they come from the great rank-and-file of American citizens.

That type of person is Roy Wier. ~~His predecessor, the late William J. Gallagher~~ He comes from our midst. He knows our needs. He has represented us with distinction in the state legislature. He has trained himself for public office by experience and education. He understands the world that he lives in and he appreciates the sacrifices and the suffering of the plain people everywhere. He knows that this is one world, because he fought for it. He knows that everywhere the average citizen, the common man, if you please, is on the march in search for freedom and opportunity.

~~He is the~~ In this election the people want to know the issues. The people of the third district

want to know the record of the candidates & their political parties. I'm convinced that they do know - they do know -

inflation, the foe of the worker and his rights, and the exploiter of the farmer.

You know that a full year before the war was over men like William Pittinger and Harold Knutson were giving the green light to the speculators and the processors by wrecking effective price control legislation. You people on the iron range know that the Republican party in this state has played politics with the steel trust at the expense of the welfare of Minnesota. You people in the Eighth district know that Republican leadership in Minnesota and in the nation have sponsored anti-labor legislation in every ~~xxx~~ session of the legislature and in every session of the Congress. You and I know that Republican congressmen and the present state administration have fought every effort to give us a decent housing program. ~~and have~~ ~~abstracted~~ You and ~~i~~ I know that Minnesota Republican Congressmen have not played fair with the great mass of American people in programs of taxation, surplus profits taxes have been repealed, the rich have gotten richer because of their opposition to a fair and equitable tax program and the burdens of taxation in this state as well as in the nation have rested increasingly upon the lower-income groups. How can this be when there is a democratic majority in Congress? The answer is simple, a handful of reactionary Democrats plus the Republican bloc has been enough to turn the tide against the people.

During the next two years President Truman will be in the White House. He has tremendous responsibilities in this post-war period. A Congress that is lined up against him will literally stalemate the processes of government. A Republican Congress will pave the way for what it did in the last post-war period when they ruined the program of Woodrow Wilson and ultimately gave America over to the monopolies, the stock-market speculators and the exploiters who through their self-appointed representatives in the White House and in Congress gave America boom and bust, high prices and inflation, stock-market manipulation and depression.

The record is surely clear on that subject. I ask you as informed citizens to analyze the program of the Republican party today and then to see whether it offers anything ~~diff~~ different from what it offered in 1920 through 1930.

It is with this in mind that I ask you to make your personal responsibility to work in behalf of the candidacy of ^{Roy Miller} John Blatnik, your ~~second~~ candidate for congress. ^{Roy Miller} John Blatnik is committed by philosophy and program to the furtherance and the improvement of the programs and policies of our late ~~is~~ beloved President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. He will support the liberal and progressive policies-- both foreign and domestic-- advanced by President Truman. He will do his part to keep the Democratic party the progressive party. He will speak with assurance and wisdom for the needs of the veteran. He knows those needs, because he is ~~was of them~~ a veteran.

The election of ^{Roy Miller} John Blatnik is a foregone conclusion if ~~in~~ you, the voters of this district, march to the polls in overwhelming numbers on November 5. When the people vote, yes, ~~yes~~ when all the people vote, democracy is in good hands. Progressive ~~is~~ government needs the support and the allegiance of every one of us. A small vote-- an election where laboring people stay home-- is to forfeit all hope of government by the people and for the people.

I cannot stress too strongly the need for getting out the vote on November 5 and for electing the Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidates-- and I mean all of them. I mean Dr. Theodore Jorgenson for United States Senate. I mean Harold Barker for governor, and ~~the~~ the other nominees on our state ticket.

This world is in a period of crisis. What we do in America will influence the direction of world politics and economics more than any other single factor. We need ~~a political party in power that understands this world and its problems. We need~~ representatives in Congress who understand ~~ing~~ this world and its problems. We need men who have lived in

the faith of the League of Nations and the United Nations and who ~~not~~ believe in the ability of their fellow-citizens to be masters of their own destiny. We need people in political office who know that we have it within ourselves to make this world all over again. These people are to be found in the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. Ours is a party of the people. Its only master is the people. John Blatnik carries the banner of this political philosophy in the Eighth Congressional district. John Blatnik will go to Washington ~~with honor~~ and serve his country in peace with the same distinction that he served his country in war.

- - -

Address by ~~Wm~~ Hubert H. Humphrey, Mayor of Minneapolis,
in support of John Blatnik, ^{D.C.} Candidate for
Congress in Eighth District, Saturday, Nov. 2, 1946.

I speak tonight to my friends in the Eighth Congressional District. I address my remarks to persons of all political faiths, whether they be Republican, Democrat, Farmer-Labor, or independents. I speak in behalf of my good friend, John Blatnik, who is ~~presently~~ the Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidate for Congress.

I have watched with ever-increasing interest the progress of this political battle in the northern section of our state. I have always had a keen interest in your area, because it represents one of the most significant economic sections of the entire United States. The people of the Eighth Congressional district are symbolic of the spirit of the United Nations. Here we see unity that comes through understanding, patriotic devotion on the part of the citizens which comes through love of democracy. It is ~~in fact~~ ~~from this district~~ from this district that Minnesota politics has received an inspiration for progressive programs and the living of the democratic life.

I have many friends in the Eighth Congressional district and it has been my privilege and pleasure to have ~~visited~~ frequently visited Duluth, Hibbing, ~~and~~ Virginia, Eveleth, Ely, Crosby-Ironton, Nashwauk, Chisholm, International Falls ^{and other} and like other Minnesotans have ~~found~~ ~~enjoyed~~ spent delightful vacation periods along the beautiful North Shore and in the lake area. I think I know the people of the Eighth District. I think I know the sort of person they would like to have as their representative in Congress. I believe I know the political ~~and~~ and social attitudes of the great majority of the men and women of Northern Minnesota.

That is why tonight I feel impelled to speak out in unqualified support of a good friend, a college associate, ^{and} a fellow progressive, ~~and~~

John Blatnik, ~~wh~~ whose ideals and political attitudes represent the highest traditions of freedom and liberty in American political life.

But this campaign has been waged with bitterness and slander on the part of John Blatnik's opposition. This campaign has taken on the character of a ~~malicious~~ malicious process of vilification and ~~outright~~ outright misrepresentation. You know what I mean. The present Congressman from the Eighth District and those who advise him and guide his political destinies have attacked my friend, John Blatnik, in a manner which is vicious and immoral. As his friend I rise to his defense. As ~~a fellow~~ one who believes with a deep and abiding faith in democracy and American ideals, I ~~wish to challenge~~ enter this campaign to challenge the ~~veracity~~ truthfulness ~~of~~ of the rumors and underground smear attack which ~~was~~ a Congressman of the United States has seen fit to resort to.

Let me state my ~~political~~ political philosophy very briefly. You have a right to know the attitudes and the philosophy of the person who is talking to you. I am a member of the Democratic party. I have been active as you know in Democratic-Farmer-Labor politics in the state of Minnesota. I have spent several years in the study of political science and economics. ~~That~~ That ~~study~~ study has convinced me more than ever of the soundness of our institutions of representative government of the fundamental and basic conflict between any philosophy of totalitarianism and democracy principles. My years of study in political science and my practical experience in public office has reaffirmed my faith in free ~~political~~ political and economic institutions. ~~Some Brief Cases~~ ~~Let's~~ Lets put it this way: I am unalterably opposed to any philosophy of government which leads to regimentation of the individual, whether that regimentation be political or economic, whether it be Fascist or Communist. I am equally opposed to a dictatorship of the right or a

~~like~~ dictatorship of the left. I just don't like dictatorship, nor do I stand in political agreement with any person or group which would undermine our American political system or would set us down the river by political opportunism or party line thinking.

~~Those of you who have been active in Democratic-Farmer-Labor circles and those of you in the Republican party know that I have consistently and vigorously fought against any effort from either within or without ~~my~~ our party to make it the tool of either Fascist or Communist political maneuvering. ~~I have good friends, both in and out of the party, who are both within and without the party who~~~~

But I do stand ~~with~~ shoulder to shoulder with those who are dedicating their efforts towards ~~making~~ making democracy work, towards making American government responsive to the needs of our people. I stand with those persons who understand that democracy and American government is the instrumentality of the people and that our government should be used as a means of equalizing the burdens and equalizing the opportunities. I stand with those persons who have the vision to see that a democratic people must be ever moving forward, ~~that~~ that a democratic ~~country~~ people ~~must~~ must give leadership to rebuilding a war-torn world, that a democratic people must and should elect representatives to public office who believe in the people and who can represent the people because they are a part of the great rank and file of the people.

That kind of person is John Blatnik. He comes from your midst. He ~~knows~~ knows your needs. He has represented ^{you} with distinction in the state legislature. He has trained himself for public office by education and experience. He understands the world that he lives in. And he appreciates the suffering and the sacrifices of the plain people everywhere. He knows that this is ~~in~~ one world, because he fought for it. He knows that there is a fraternity of men because he lived with our brothers~~sky~~

beyond the seas. He knows that man does not live by bread alone, because he has placed his faith in God Almighty and has used his ability and his energy to create on this earth the good society which is the challenge to every Christian and a challenge to every decent citizen regardless of religious faith.

Mr. Congressman of the Eighth District, you are guilty ~~of~~ of foul play. You and your hatchet-men have said of John Blatnik what the Tories and the reactionaries ~~x~~ of another day said of Thomas Jefferson. You and your ghost-writers, Mr. Congressman, have resorted to fiction-- not to fact-- you have challenged the ~~Americanism~~ Americanism of a young American who proved to the satisfaction of the President of the United States, of the American State Department, of the United States ~~Army~~ Army that he was not only a good American and a ~~hi~~ believer in democracy but ~~that~~ that he is also a heroic American and a fighter for democracy. Lets have no more of this rumor-mongering. The people want to know the issues. The people ~~want~~ of the Eighth District do not care to have their intelligence insulted by the political tripe which ~~was~~ was so characteristic of the old-time machine politics which ~~the~~ American is today repudiating in both political parties.

In this election, (Mr. Congressman), bread and butter, meat and clothes, decent homes and health are the main problems that confront us. The American people are interested in jobs, in economic opportunity and security, in world peace and international justice. But you would never guess that these were the issues from listening to the Republican ~~in~~ candidates and their spokesman. There was a time when some of us believed that the Republican party would be taking a ~~turn~~ turn towards liberalism. Yes, there was a Wendell Willkie who spoke out in defense of liberal principles, but then there was a Republican machine that cut him down and destroyed him in the midst of his battle. There was a time that Minnesota Republicans

recognizing the political power and leadership of Franklin Roosevelt, talked liberal and progressive principles. I ~~but~~ say talked it, because it is clear today that they never believed it. The campaign slogans, the campaign talk and the campaign tricks of the Republican leadership in this election has gone back to the dark days of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. Like the old Kings of France they have never learned anything and they apparently have never forgotten anything. Fourteen years of progress in this nation has left no impact upon the political and economic ~~think~~ ~~thinking~~ ~~upon~~ ~~the~~ of Republican leadership. They think they smell in the air the scent of victory. They are so ~~fanatical~~ ^{greedy} for power and so confident ~~that~~ that they ~~are~~ ~~have~~ driven from their midst all hope of liberal thought and have taken to their political bosom the bossism of a Chairman Reece, the reaction of Bob Taft, the political opportunism of Senator Ball, and the economic philosophy of the 1920s.

Look at the record of the Republican party and its representatives in the State of Minnesota. The Congressional delegation from the State of Minnesota was wrong before the war, wrong in its isolationism, wrong in its understanding of Hitlerism, wrong in its economic program. All the way down the line, Minnesota Republicans in Congress have obstructed the realization of the program of Franklin D. Roosevelt. All along the line, before the war they obstructed the strengthening of American diplomacy and armed ~~extra~~ forces. All along the line, they have fought labor, double-crossed the farmer, and have even gone so far as to oppose hot lunches for school children, adequate pensions for the old people, full employment legislation for our workers, fair employment laws for our minority groups. And in all too many instances have been the spokesman for the vested interests in the ~~iron~~ iron range and throughout America. Their record proves them guilty of every charge I have made. In fact their record interpreted in the light of history and present day events indicates that the Republicans in Minnesota have been the agents of

Now that Governor Thye has thrown the aged and outworn "red herring" into the Third Congressional District contest, it might be well to ask the Governor himself a few questions about his party's candidate for Congress in the Third Congressional District. After all, you know that both Roy Wier and George MacKinnon sat in several sessions of the Minnesota State Legislature from 1933 to 1939 where they had to cast votes on some mighty important issues to the people of this District and State, for the reason that the great majority of the common people of this District and State were in the midst of their worst depression--unemployment, drought and relief lines--following the Republican collapse in 1929.

Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote for a sales tax? House file #1564 which Governor Olson had to veto, with this quote, as part of his veto message, and I quote a paragraph of said veto, "I am returning to you without my approval H.F. #1564. I object to the bill on the principle ground that it is not based upon the means and ability of the persons taxed, to pay the taxes imposed. Those who can least afford to pay are taxed the most and those who can afford to pay, are taxed the least or not taxed at all," end of quote.

Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against an effective corporate excess tax in the same bill? MacKinnon's vote against this amendment would have saved the mining interests and big corporations of the State millions of dollars because the bill reduced the corporated excess tax rate to five mills and applied only to certain public utilities.

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against the \$4,000 homestead tax exemption legislation passed in 1935?~~

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against the increase of income taxes in the higher brackets of the income law as of Thursday, April 11, 1935?~~

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against the increase of the telephone utilities tax on April 10, 1935?~~

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against the increased gross earnings tax on railroads Thursday, April 11, 1935?~~

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against the party designation bill for members of the legislature January 25, 1937?~~

~~Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote against H.F. #1766 which would have permitted additional funds to be voted to match grants by Federal Government for highway construction in 1935?~~

Does the Governor defend his candidates' plan in 1935 to finance old age assistance? H.F. #1409 which placed a poll or head tax of 3.65 on every citizen of Minnesota between the ages of 21 and 65.

Does the Governor defend his candidates' vote for the lien law on all old age assistance recipients, passed in 1939?



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org