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speech

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MAYOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY ACCEPTING ENDORSEMENT OF THE D-F-L PARTY AT STATE CONVENTION AT BRAINERD, MINNESOTA, ON JUNE 13, 1948

Thank you, thank you very much. *I am very glad to address the*
great Democratic-Farmer-Labor Convention of the most wonderful state in the Union
--the State of Minnesota. Believe me, folks, it has been difficult for a fellow
who likes to talk ~~like~~ ^{so} I do to sit in this convention for better than one day
--because some of us were here on Friday--and to await this great opportunity
that you have afforded me ^{and} I have a message ~~that~~ I want to give to you..

First of all, of course, I want to thank those who have so graciously
seconded the endorsement for the United States Senate. I surely want to thank
the Endorsement Committee because I know of the hours of time they have put
into their very difficult task of looking over fellow candidates that we have
for future nomination ~~and~~ ^{for} the election in November.

Then, too, I want to say that this convention has been a bit different
^{from} than any ~~that~~ we have had ^{before}. Barney Allen said something about that yesterday.
Sure, we have had rivalry here. We have had a lot of it and, believe me, when
you are out in the hotel lobbies and you are over having dinner, you hear people
saying this and saying that, wondering how this is going to come out and wonder-
ing whether or not to vote for this person or that person. That is the way
progressives always act and may we always be that way. This has been good clean
fighting. You have witnessed it here today in the convention and ~~then~~ you have
seen adequate testimony of what good decent people, hard-hitting progressive
people can do.

My good friend, Orv Freeman, stood up here today, ^{and} and of course, it
thrills me when he says a good word ^{and} and seconded my nomination, my endorsement.

My good friend, Tom Walsh from over in St. Paul, stood up here and
gave you a dramatic message, seconding that endorsement.

Then, that great liberal leader of western Minnesota, one ^{who has} that stood the test, one ^{who} that has been on the job in the State Legislature, Senator Hagen came up here and said some of the nicest words that I ~~may~~ ever hope to hear said in my behalf.

When you add it all up and you look out over this congregation of our delegates, I think we know that we have a party and when I say party, I mean a fighting party that is going to ^{bring} ~~throw~~ the war to the Republican Party, I mean a party that is going to lick them, and decisively, in November.

Tom, I was awfully glad to hear you bring up the name of that distinguished Democrat, a very beloved citizen of this state, my good companion in municipal government, Mayor John McDonough. I should say ex-Mayor now because he didn't run for re-election. I know the guy could have had the job for life....Ex-Mayor McDonough of St. Paul (Applause)

Johnny has been campaigning every minute since he has been here. He has buttonholed more people, believe me, than they have made buttonholes this last year. He has been hard at work and he is a loyal, true, let me say, Roosevelt Democrat. He is a liberal and he knows of what he speaks when he talks about progressive politics.

I think I ought to tell you ~~that~~ of his successor, Ed Delaney. You know that is a very good name in St. Paul. Ed Delaney just called a few moments ago and Ed wanted me to express his greetings to this convention. He is another one of our people and I think that his election showed the signs of the times and I think it is a tribute to the people in Ramsey County. Ed Delaney ran as a labor-endorsed candidate. He ran as a progressive candidate. He didn't disguise his political affiliations. He was known as a Democrat in the second largest city in the state and Ed Delaney swamped them. He won hands down. (Applause)

You know what happened up in St. Cloud, too, and it has been happening in other parts of this state and no matter how much ^{our opposition} they may want to disguise it, ~~our opposition~~, the fact is that when people have a chance to vote, when they have a chance to know the issues, when they have had the chance in the year of 1947 in my city, in 1948 in St. Cloud, in 1948 in St. Paul, when the people have had the chance, they have overwhelmingly elected progressive Democratic-Farmer-Labor candidates to their office.

I want to pay a word of tribute to our State Chairman, Mr. Barker, who has worked tirelessly, who has had a most difficult job. Any body who thinks it has been an easy job ^{from} since 1946 to 1948, ~~he~~ should have just tried to be a party officer. Mr. Barker has given real service to this party and I hope that before this convention adjourns, it will take appropriate action commending him for his work, for his leadership and his help through these trying times. Mr. Barker ~~er~~ deserves a real tribute and a real honor from the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of this state. Let's give him one. (Applause)

Then, too, we had another spirited contest. Mr. Barker was in on that. I don't think the votes have all been counted. That was Mr. Barker, Barney Allen, John Lyons (or Jack Lyons). I don't know where you are going to get three better Democratic-Farmer-Laborites than that, and they were contesting for the National Committee job.

Friends, do you see what's happening? We today have the top leadership of the state of Minnesota contesting for the positions of leadership in the top progressive political party of the nation right here in the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of the State of Minnesota. That is a good sign for the days that are coming ahead.

Let's support whoever is nominated. Let's support whoever may be our party officers. Let's ~~not~~ give our executive committee, our national com-

mitteemen and national committeewomen, our party chairman and party officers unqualified support. Let's go on out and remember that we have only one political enemy that really amounts to something. That political party in this state is the well-heeled, well-oiled, well-machined, well-organized Republican Party of the State of Minnesota. That's the enemy that must be defeated.

Let's just ~~go down~~ and see what's happened these past few months.

How many of you remember that State Central Committee meeting back in February?

That was the beginning of the change of events. Then on April 30, we had those precinct caucuses and I need not say there were a lot of ^{Republicans} people throughout the state that looked upon those precinct caucuses as something ~~well done~~. ^{god for them,} ~~They said~~

~~the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party~~ ~~was~~ going to cut itself to ribbons. What happened at the precinct caucuses on April 30? I'll tell you what happened at those caucuses and I hope this goes out to every person in this state.

Instead of our party being ~~weakened~~, our party was stronger by ten-fold--by actual count ten-fold of the number of people in the precinct caucuses ^{two years ago} on ~~April 30~~ so that today in every ~~state~~ county in the State of Minnesota, each and every one of them, we have an active county organization. In many a township, a township committee, and in practically every precinct in this state, we have a person that we can call upon to be our leader, to go on out and work with his friends and neighbors.

This isn't bad news to the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party. If there is a news flash in this one, my friends of the fourth estate, I say this, that the news flash of 1948 in politics in Minnesota is that the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party has out-organized, out-worked, out-numbered, out-manned the Republican Party two to one on the basis of precinct organization. I have said repeatedly that I think we owe our friends in the third party a debt of thanks, and I want

to say it again. Yes, we finally had a clear-cut issue in this state, a clear-cut issue with the great ~~majority~~ ^{majority} over here as compared with a very slim majority, but a clear ~~issue~~ ^{issue}, if you please, with the rank and file of our people, ^{and they} against a handful of people ~~on the other side~~ ^{on the other side} who were trying to mislead ~~a~~ ^{them} large number of Minnesotans. The people of this state in every town and village and in every township rose up and accepted that challenge. We didn't walk away from it. We took on the issue ^{right political} on the ~~only~~ ^{only} battleground, ~~the one and only~~ ^{the one and only} battle ground, ^{This was} the true test of whether or not a handful--now mark my words-- ~~and~~ a small handful of ~~third party~~ ^{third party} leaders--~~not~~ ^{not} people who are going to vote for Henry Wallace--but ~~third party~~ ^{third party} leaders who were determined that they were going to capture a growing, liberal, fighting, political party. ^{Now I don't mean people who are going to vote for Henry Wallace, I mean} We took them ^{third party} on and today is a large demonstration of what can happen when the people know ^{the people just} the issue. ~~They~~ ^{And} go to work, ~~because~~ today we have a party that is strong, clean--cleaned of any Communist infiltration, cleaned of any type of corruption and corrosion--and we can go to the people of the State of Minnesota and say, "Follow us and we will give you good, clean progressive government." I want to thank you, every one of you. (Applause)

Yes, frankly, folks, the eyes of the nation have been upon Minnesota. This is the one state that is being watched and I ^{will} ~~will~~ tell you why. It is out of this great state of Minnesota and its sister states in this Midwest, ^{that} things have happened repeatedly in American politics. Let me give you some demonstration of what has happened. Out of the Midwest back in the 1890's came the great ~~movement~~ ^{movement} that was known as Populism. The great liberal movement of the 90's which ~~gave~~ ^{gave} that new shot of life, that good conscience, that sense of humanitarian decency to the Democratic Party and ultimately afforded it an opportunity to elect a Woodrow Wilson with his new freedom. Populism

sprang from our people. What else happened in this great state? The Non-Partisan League found many of its people here in the State of Minnesota, People who were sick and tired of being constantly in debt because of selfish conniving of special interests. People on the farms, people in the shops and in the factories who said we will have no more of this confounded machine politics, if you please, of the established political parties. The Non-Partisan League rose up and out of that Non-Partisan League in Minnesota came the great and mighty Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota which gave to the world Minnesota's greatest leader bar none, the late Governor Floyd B. Olson. (Applause)

Yes, this state was always a welcome place for Bob LaFollette of Wisconsin. This state always had thousands of friends for George Norris of Nebraska and I want to point out to those who have any doubts about the great liberalism of this state. This state and the great Midwest with its native American philosophy of liberalism provided the spiritual inspiration for what we now call the New Deal. The great agricultural program that saved this nation's agriculture came out of the Midwest.

Minnesota has an opportunity such has never been given to another state at a time when the Republican Party is walking around in the shadow of Hoover. At a time when the Democratic Party needs a new sense of inspiration and a new sense of dynamic energy, the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota says ¹⁹³⁴ "watch us." We'll present you with a liberal program. We will present you with liberal candidates. We will present you with a gift to the American people of effective, *honesty* liberal leadership, ¹⁹³⁴ and that is what we are doing right here in the State of Minnesota.

All over this world, friends, this crisis is going on -- all over. In Europe today what do you see? On the one hand over here you see the raggedy-taggedy edges of Communism. Noisy? Oh, you bet. Militant? None more militant. Filled up with their doctrine and ^{their} dogma. On the other hand you see over here the old trappings of the past -- the monarchists, the aristocracy, the cartelists, the rightists, as they call themselves in Europe. But in the great center of that population of Europe, with its hundreds of millions, stands a vital, dynamic, militant, social, democratic center. And today in Italy, as in the last election, the people rose up, cast their ballots and placed their confidence not in radicalism, not in stand-patism, but they placed their ballots and placed their confidence in progressive liberal democracy. It happened in France. It happened in the Scandinavian countries. It happened in England. It's going to happen here. We have the answer here; ~~now~~ we know it. Let's guard that answer. Let's build on to it. Let's develop a political philosophy in this state, friends, that doesn't have to have its antecedents in the Kremlin -- it doesn't have to have its inspiration in the NAM; but it has its antecedents and its inspiration in the hearts and the toil and the sacrifice of the people of this great state of Minnesota. That's the kind of a ~~political~~ party we want. (Applause)

Well, now, let's just take a good look through at this political situation in 1948. I suppose there are one or two people around the convention hall that are just a little bit pessimistic. I suppose they say, "well, we've just been used to getting licked." Let's look at the record. As one good Democrat used to say, "let's take a look at the record." Four times in a row in this state -- 1932, 1936, 1940 and 1944 -- four times in a row the great state of Minnesota cast an overwhelming vote for our late and beloved President Franklin Roosevelt. We're progressives out here. (Applause)

If we've ever suffered defeat, it's been defeat that's come from our own mismanagement. It's been defeat, let me say, that's come from our own ⁵⁵dissension in our own ranks. ~~What is the threat today, then?~~ And I want to appeal this very hour, not to that little group, let me say, of militant, doctrinaire people -- fellow travelers. They're hopeless. Any man who thinks he can make peace with the Communists or Fascists has lost his good judgment. It's impossible. We're not talking about them. (Applause) But let me make it quite clear. Let's make it quite clear. They're so limited -- let me say, they're so few -- that they can hold their state convention in a telephone booth, and have plenty of room. (Applause)

What, then, is the threat? There are people in this state today, and there are people in other parts of America who are saying, "We're worried, we're disturbed, we don't know whether it will be peace or war." We're wondering about high prices. We're worried about inflation. My son doesn't have a house to live in. We're worried about the price structure. We're worried about a tax on labor, and some of those people say we see no hope -- maybe we better cast our vote for Mr. Wallace." That's what they say, and we might just as well admit it. Oh, let's go out and appeal to those people, friends, and let's make it clear, we have to be honest with each other. Either a Democrat or a Republican will be elected President. One or the other. Not anybody else. It will be either a Democrat or a Republican. The next Congress will be a Republican reactionary Congress, or it will be a Democratic liberal, progressive Congress -- one or the other. Those are the alternatives. Now we must go on out to these people, and we must point out to them the great gains which have been made -- not gains that have been made by people who have always agreed in every detail with us -- but gains that have been made primarily because there were enough people who were willing to support ^{SOME} common programs in a common battle. We need to go out to these people and point out to them clearly what's happening.

And let's take a look at things as they are. What will a reactionary victory mean? What do some of these people say? There was a gentleman on this stage yesterday who had something to say, I understand, about his movement. This gentleman was talking about how you folks should come back into his ranks. Look, friends, let's not kid ourselves. We'll go along with our own program. We won't go back into the ranks of people who have rankly, let me tell you, misused the name of America. We'll never go back into that. Not on your life, ^{But} we're going to go out to the people of Minnesota, and we're going to have a chance to tell them this story. What are a handful of the third party people saying? They're saying oh, we can't win anyhow. In 1952, though, we'll win. What we need to do is to have four years of mismanagement, four years of two times as bad as the 80th Congress, and that's been ten times as bad as anything since 1920. ~~We need to have~~ (applause) -- ~~We~~ need to have four years of Hooverism in the White House, and four years of Grundyism in the Senate. We need to have four years, if you please, more of Knutsonism in the House of Representatives. (Applause) That's what they're saying, and then what are they really saying to the American people? They're saying to the workers, ^{year} all for ~~our~~ miserable plot, in order for us to appease the forces of totalitarianism, in order for us to have things as we want it, workers, I'll tell you what we want you to do. We want you to have four years of unemployment. We want you to have four years more of Taft-Hartley double strength. We want the farmers, they'll say, to have four years of no A.A.A, four years of curtailed R.E.A. We'd like the unorganized workers to have four years at 40¢ an hour, or less. We'd like to have the children have four years of no hot school lunches, and after four years of everybody starving to death, everybody going crazy -- then we'll elect somebody who is crazy enough to lead us -- that's what ~~me~~ they're trying to say. (Applause)

Let me repeat it again -- I say there is a handful of people that are talking that kind of nonsense. Why, my good friends, that isn't the politics of democracy; that's the politics of revolution, and this country wants none of it. We know what we want in America. We have had the beginnings. We had the beginnings in the 1930's. The beginnings of a social security program that we want to carry on. The beginnings of help to our aged people that we want to increase. We had the beginnings of taking care of our soil so that it is not cursed and ruined by erosion, and we want to go on with that program. We have had the beginnings of rural electrification -- we want every farm to have electricity. We had the beginnings, if you please, of building a strong, free labor movement, and we don't want to see it curbed or checked. We want it to go ahead and develop and mature and grow more responsible and more productive in the processes of democracy. We have had the beginnings in this country, if you please, of taking care of our boys and girls in school. We don't want that to stop. We want to go ahead. We have had the beginnings of public health programs. We have had the beginnings of a working, fighting democracy in this country in the 1930's, and it's just been sidetracked since 1946. And all we need to do, all we need to do my friends, ^{is this:} ~~and this is it.~~ We don't need to elect a third party to clear that up. All we need to do is to defeat the second party, which is none other than the Republican Party, and we'll be on the high roads of democracy, streamlined 20th century, and raring to go. That's all we've got to do. (Applause) You think I'm fooling about this? Let's take a look at the shape of things as they are lining up. What has this 80th Congress been doing? Well, my friends, they're doing nice little things that play into the future, if you please. If you could look into the crystal ball of politics, you ~~can~~ ^{could} see what they have behind the scenes. Mr. Grundy is behind the scenes, when the reciprocal trade agreements were extended only one more year -- just one more year. Why just one more year? Because they're waiting to see if they can dupe the American people

into giving them four years to destroy the reciprocal trade treaties -- that's why. They're going ahead today and cutting the heart out of REA, as Mr. Allen told ~~me~~ you yesterday. Why? Because they want four years, if you please, to give everything to the private power trust of this country -- to milk, drain, ditch and damn this country, if you please, for their own selfish interests. That's what they're trying to do.

What else have they offered the American people? Are they raising the minimum wage standards of our workers? They are not. They can't even get it out of committee, but they might have all kinds of good intentions. They intend to get it out of committee, they say, but not if they elect a Republican President and an overwhelmingly Republican reactionary Congress. Not on your life. What else is the shape of things to come, ~~offered?~~ Let's take a look at our foreign policy. On the one hand, in good humanitarian spirit, they say hooray for the Marshall Plan. They vote for the Marshall Plan, not, some of them, because they thought it was good for Europe, not because they thought it would re-establish democracy in Europe, but because they thought it would stop Communism. And once ~~that~~ they ~~have~~ authorized the payment, what do they do then? They start to get a little penny-pinching. They get this economy method. They ^{ire} got to balance the budget again. They've got to kind of pull back, and the House of Representatives right at this hour is thinking about curtailing our expenditures for foreign relief to a people who have fought and died with us -- a people who desperately need it. If we're going to prevent the growth of totalitarianism, the Republican Congress and its leaders who talk about Americanism, today are cutting the heart out of American foreign policy. That's what they have in mind, friends, and don't you ever forget it.

Give them four years, and let's see what happens. Do I have to remind you? Two chickens in every pot -- two cars in every garage -- do I have to remind you about the political round-house they had us in, looking for prosperity around the corner until the country was dizzy? Do you need to be told about it? Do the

farmers about this state need to be told about bank foreclosures? Do they need to be told about inflation and deflation? Good grief, folks, we've experienced this -- we don't need any lectures on this. We felt it in our own bodies and our own minds. Let's wake up. Let's go on out and tell this message to the people, and let's tell them ~~xx~~ very frankly that of course we're going to elect a Democratic President -- of course we're going to elect a Democratic majority in the Senate, and I'm here to tell you I'm going to be there on the first roll call, with your help. (Applause) And just to make sure that everything is really as it ought to be, we'll do a little changing of scenery in the House of Representatives. Some of those people who never knew about the housing shortage because they never voted for a housing program will have a first-hand opportunity to come home and face a housing shortage as they hunt for a place to live. (Applause)

Well, folks, just as I get warmed up, what do they do to me? They tell me only two more minutes, and I have had so much to tell these delegates because, folks, this isn't a one-man show. No one man ever won anything, and there never will be one. Roosevelt needed his people, this Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party needs its people, and I can tell every one of you that I need you as I have never needed anybody else. And I'm going to go out and work for you -- I'm going to fight for you, and I want you to get into this battle with me. And don't listen to the rumor mongers -- don't listen to the ~~profits~~ of despair -- just go on out and know that, believe you me, this will be a campaign that they'll long remember. Win, lose, or draw, I'll guarantee the opposition that they'll know they've been some place, and been in some fight before this thing is over. (Applause)

I close my remarks, and I want you to listen to this, because it was said all over America, and this is my creed -- this is your creed -- this is how we believe -- it's called the Freedom Pledge: I am an American, a free American, free to speak without fear, free to worship God in my own way, free to stand for

what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, free to choose those who govern my country — this heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and all mankind, God be willing, and with your help.

On to victory, friends, in November. Let's not spare the horses. Let's give this country of ours and this state of ours an opportunity to take out of the United States ~~xxxx~~. Senate the special errand boy of the National Manufacturers Association. *of*
And let's give the people of the state of Minnesota a chance to see what a fighting Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party can do, and will do not only now, but in the future.
Come on, folks, let's go! (Applause)



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