

BROADCAST BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY ON JAMES ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

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When history looks over the past few years, it will find one of the greatest dramas in the ~~history~~^{story} of political democracy.

In contrast to the backdrop of nations that have one-party governments and ruthless purges of the opposition, we are displaying a drama of democracy that all by itself can demonstrate what we mean by free, popular government.

Two years ago, a Democratic President, operating under a resolution passed by a Republican Congress, called upon a former President of the United States from the opposition party to criticize the way the government was being run and to help improve it.

There are many countries today where opposition party leaders and especially defeated heads of past administrations are seldom if ever heard from again. Here they are invited to talk - and to criticize and to help improve the present administration and the whole structure of government.

Two years ago this week, Congress passed a resolution creating

the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Govern-
ment, known as the Hoover Commission. That committee of 12 men -
half Republicans and half Democrats - has only recently finished
19 full reports suggesting ways of improving and streamlining the
huge structure of our federal government. Former President Herbert
Hoover, as Chairman of the Commission, has devoted great time and
energy to the task. > The commission members are all men of ~~high~~
importance ~~repute~~ in public life and include as Vice-Chairman of the Commis-
sion the present Secretary of State, Dean Acheson.

Not only is the Commission itself bi-partisan, but the recom-
mendations they have made to the Congress have so far been agreed
to by large majorities of both political parties.

There is drama in a situation where a former Republican Pre-
sident advises a Democratic President on how to improve his own
branch of the government, and the President from the opposing party
agrees with most of the recommendations. This is ~~an important in-~~
a testimonial
~~direction to~~ our political faith.

But the reports of the Hoover Commission and the Commission itself have much more meaning to our democracy. We often hear the success or failure of the Hoover Commission measured in how many dollars the recommendations will save. There is no doubt that saving taxpayer's money is important; but important as that is, economy is only a by-product of the committee recommendations.

The real product of the Hoover Commission report is better government - more representative government - a federal government that will respond to the will of the people throughout the nation.

You, as a voter in the average congressional district, have elected only five people in Washington: a Congressman, two Senators, a Vice-President and a President. You have elected five people to run your federal government. But there are 2 million people actually running it. More than 2 million men and women work in the federal government. Your control of how they represent you lies in the hands of those five men you elect every two, four and six years. The hold on democracy is a slippery one. It is

tenuous, and it has failed in many countries. As the problems of our economy and our society become more and more complex, the administrators and special experts in our government become more important. But if the framework of our government is straight and true, the lines to the people can be just as strong as they were when decisions could be made by all the people sitting in one large ~~meeting~~ *meeting.*

and that, ~~let us say~~, was the real purpose of the Hoover Commission. ~~They~~ ^{It} had as ^{its} ~~their~~ goal the straightening of the lines of authority to the elected officials of the people - to the President and to the Congress - of all the millions of men and women who are appointed in posts around the world to represent your best interests.

That is why there was little dissension in the Congress. That is why the Hoover Commission could be composed of leaders of both our parties and still work together. Because the goals of both our parties are the perfection and the strengthening of democracy for

the best operation of government no matter which party has been elected to leadership.

Let us not underrate the difficulties the Hoover Commission faced. The two million people who compose the federal government are not all in Washington working conveniently in one of the large government buildings. Only one employee in ten works in Washington, and there are more government employees outside of the United States than there are in Washington, D.C. - civilian employees, mind you.

Furthermore, the federal government only grew as large as it is now in the past 20 years. Recently the needs and demands of the people have necessitated federal action in many new fields. ^{In} ~~In that~~ ^{twenty years} ~~short time,~~ the number of employees was increased fourfold and the cost of government jumped from \$3 billion to \$41 billion. Efficient management of a machine that grew so fast was simply not possible. Actually we have managed quite well for the haste we had to use to set up this huge government. But the lines of authority need straightening.

Attaining proper government organization is a job for experts - and the Hoover Commission hired experts to make the initial study of the workings of the federal agencies. These Task Forces reported to the Commission the results of their thorough investigation. Like the Commission itself, these Task Forces were composed of experts in government and in the specific field they were studying.

The reports of the Task Forces were studied by the full Commission, and were used as data for the report the Commission finally drew up. The Commission report then came to us in the Congress.

I am happy to say that the Congress has acted quickly ~~on this~~ ~~matter~~ - showing, I believe, the real concern of Congress for maintaining democratic instead of bureaucratic government. The basic act - which provides authority for the President to reorganize most of the Executive Departments has already passed the Congress. But Congress has kept the right of veto, and either the House or the Senate can disapprove any of the President's plans.

The President, too, has acted quickly and has already presented

to Congress seven basic plans for reorganizing major parts of the executive branch. Congress must now decide whether to approve the plans or whether to pass a resolution disapproving. If the two months pass without disapproval, the plan can go into effect. Some reorganization plans will require a special act of Congress, however.

One plan already submitted to Congress covers the setting up of a new Department, a Welfare Department, which would have equal status with other departments, such as Commerce, State and Interior, and would have a cabinet officer at its head. This plan follows generally the recommendation of the Hoover Commission.

Other proposals would streamline the Labor Department, the Post Office Department, the National Security Council and National Resources Board, the Civil Service Commission and the Maritime Commission. The seventh would transfer the Public Roads Administration to the Commerce Department.

These plans go to the committees of Congress most directly concerned with the activity covered. The committee makes a full

study of the President's recommendation, and the Senate and House then decide whether to veto the plan or let it pass.

One streamlining plan already passed by Congress consolidates into one agency, called the General Services Agency, the Bureau of Federal Supply, the War Assets Administration, the Federal Works Agency and the National Archives. It is estimated that this one change alone will save the taxpayers \$450 million a year.

I have said that the main purpose of reorganization is to improve democracy; but of course with the efficiency that alone can bring responsibility in government, we will also get economy. The Tydings bill, for instance, which would give the Defense Secretary power to further consolidate the armed forces, will permit savings of \$1 to ~~\$3~~ ^{Billion dollar more.} ~~BILLION~~ dollars. This bill, however, has yet to pass the House. There are other bills now in Congress which will put more of the Commission reports in effect if they are passed. The bill to reorganize the State Department has already passed the Congress without a single member opposed.

While this improved efficiency can save the nation large sums of money, this is not a windfall which just suddenly comes down on us all. Some people are bound to lose by these changes. Jobs will be made unnecessary and people will be ^{dismissed,} ~~fired~~. Lush projects that aren't to the best benefit of the majority of American people will be scrapped and some of the people who hoped to profit will not be able to. I can only ask all of you to think today of the nation as a whole and to support the reorganization of the federal government where it makes for efficiency, economy and - most important, better popular control of the government.

~~I don't believe I have received one letter opposing the Hoover Commission reports and the plans for more federal efficiency. But I do get many letters and telegrams and personal calls from people who want to retain those inefficiencies that they themselves are profiting from.~~

There can be no economy for all unless each one of us is willing to stand for economy on those dealings of government that affect him.

But even more important - there can be no true democracy unless
each of us keeps in mind the welfare of us all.



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