

Excerpts from
Speech by
U. S. Senator HUBERT H. HUMPHREY of Minnesota,
~~to be delivered before the~~
~~Seattle Chapter~~
~~Americans for Democratic Action~~
~~November 13, 1949~~
National Chairman,
Americans for Democratic Action

~~It is with great pleasure that I come before you tonight to~~
~~address the ADAers in Seattle. First off, let me say that I have become~~
~~very well acquainted with your liberal representatives in the United States~~
~~Congress, Senator Warren Magnuson and Representatives Hugh Mitchell and~~
~~Henry Jackson. These men have been in the forefront of the recent fights~~
~~for adequate housing and public power. Their voting records represent a~~
~~glaring contrast when compared with the records of the Republican Senator~~
~~and Representatives that the State of Washington sends to Congress.~~
~~Magnuson, Jackson and Mitchell vote 100 percent liberal.~~

Among other things, the first Session of the 81st Congress has made great strides in the enactment of social legislation. We have provided for public power transmission lines, telephones for the farmers, public housing and slum clearance. We have increased the minimum wage to 75¢ an hour, and enacted a rounded and aggressive foreign policy dedicated to the preservation of Democracy at home and abroad. The House has expanded and increased Social Security, and FEPC is on the calendar in both houses.

We should have done more, nobody will deny that; however, you must bear in mind that on many issues a powerful coalition of Dixiecrats and Old Guard Republicans were a constant drag. This was especially true in our attempts to enact Civil Rights legislation and repeal the Taft-Hartley Act. In the Senate the Dixie-GOP Coalition lined up behind Senator Wherry to further insure against the enactment of Civil Rights legislation, but I want to tell you now, we are going to take up FEPC in January and we are

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going to ride out the filibustering of this coalition until a second vote is taken. The time has come for the Senate of the United States to stand and be counted on the clear-cut issue of equal rights for all the people.

Within recent weeks, the reactionary elements in this country have started a new and vigorous drive to prevent the enactment of further Fair Deal legislation. They have labeled this Fair Deal with the scare words of "welfare state" and "statism." Already this attack has begun to boomerang.

I have always believed that it was the purpose of the state to represent the "welfare" of all the people. We in the ADA have joined together because we agree that those who are able and willing to work must have that opportunity. We believe that empty pantries in the homes of American workers and unsalable crops on our farms are un-American. We declare that those who shrug off the hunger of the children of the unemployed as necessary to normalcy are guilty of subversive activity.

We insist that the people of the United States do not exist to sustain an economy, but that the economic system of this country exists to meet the legitimate needs of the people. By every test of the American ethic, it is clear that those who own the means of production and distribution hold it at the sufferance of the American people and subject to their power. Acting through their government and within the limits of the Constitution, the people exercise the right to have such property used for the promotion of their welfare. Any other construction of the American democratic ideal would define the United States as a nation in which the people were granted the freedom to assemble in debating societies, and the monopolists and extortionists were granted the freedom to pick their pockets.

We refuse to be frightened into the hands of the domestic reactionaries by the boogy man labeled "the welfare state," held in the quaking hands of elder statesmen, whose own welfare is adequately cared for and who never believed in the New Deal anyway.

We have, in the ADA, for nearly three years now, stated categorically that that government is best which affords the maximum economic security consistent with the freedom of the individual to speak, to worship, to associate, to work, to help elect, etc. I believe that the twin goals of modern liberal action must be to broaden economic security and to strengthen individual freedom. Our very heritage includes the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It was to secure these rights that this government was instituted. The pursuit of happiness is far from spending our lives in the pursuit of a job controlled by a man whose sole right to own job-producing property is that given him by the government of the people.

The American people have accepted the proposition that a private enterprise economy regulated by the people through their government can be so managed as to give us the heritage which the Declaration of Independence proclaims. But the burden is not upon us to prove our right to a system run for our welfare. The burden is upon the forces of the privileged, the elder statesmen, and those for whom they speak to prove their willingness to help assure the realization of our rights, while they continue to enjoy the personal bounty which the system has brought them.

There exists in this country today a small, but powerful minority who look forward eagerly to recession. This group is made up of finance capitalists who know how to ride the business cycle and pick up "depression bargains." It is made up of monopolists who view a depression as the easiest way of putting their small competitors through the wringer and forcing them

out of business. It is made up of those economic Bourbons who see depression as a means of weakening organized labor.

While on this subject of "statism" and "welfare state," let me tell you that in Washington of late there has been much talk about who is loyal and who is disloyal to America. I submit that the most dangerous type of disloyalty and subversion can be found among those who work toward scarcity instead of abundance, who regard booms and busts as inevitable, and who oppose the objective of a sustained expansion of the American economy. I submit that it is disloyal to America to maintain that "depressions are the price we must pay for freedom." Fortunately, for the future of our country, there is a growing mass of sentiment which believes in the good old American idea that this great country of ours should be a land of expanding and abundant opportunity and, therefore, is working toward the President's goal of a \$300,000,000,000 national economy.

We have heard a lot of talk recently about government economies mixed in with the irresponsible belittling of the welfare state. Why should this be? The business community and the monopolists cannot really object that their welfare has been or is being neglected. Ever since the founder of the present-day Republican Party, Alexander Hamilton, convinced the Congress of the wisdom of federal subsidies for manufacturers, government has adequately cared for the welfare of private enterprise. Consider, for example, the tariff; the gift of 179,000,000 acres of land to the railroads; the handing over of water power sites to private utilities; and Mr. Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation--the rich man's WPA.

So when the businessmen and their political and journalistic supporters cry out against the "welfare state" and plead for government "economy" what they really mean is that they want no legislation that cuts the masses of people in for a larger share of our national bounty.

In in
Portland
+
Seattle
and
the rest
of
Coast

There has been proposed in the Congress a Columbia Valley Authority. Such an authority would provide the Pacific Northwest the adequate facilities for development of the estimated 41 percent of the total potential hydro-electric power of the nation which is located in this great region. The purpose of the CVA has as its goal decentralization of federal authority, so that you people here in the Northwest will have a regional authority with full power to manage your great natural resources, and I say to you that this CVA belongs in the pattern that the immortal Lincoln outlined when he said, "The legitimate objective of government is to do for the people what needs to be done, but which they cannot by individual effort do at all or do so well for themselves."

The CVA is a part and parcel of our liberal pro-democratic program both at home and abroad. How one can rationalize a stand against social welfare legislation at home and be in favor of a pro-democratic international program is beyond me. The Communist propagandists in Europe and Asia have used to great advantage the fact that the Republican Party has supported the U. S. foreign policy, while at the same time supported a reactionary obstructionist domestic policy. We cannot convince the democratic peoples of the world that we support their way of life if we are going to deny ^{our own people} the same. We must realize that the double standard of a liberal foreign policy and a conservative domestic program cannot meet the challenge of the extreme right or left.

The ADA all over the nation is rallying to the support of the welfare state. The offensive has been launched in the farm areas, as well as in the cities, to insure the election of a Congress that will legislate in the interest of the general welfare and not bow to the reactionary pressures of the monopolies.



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