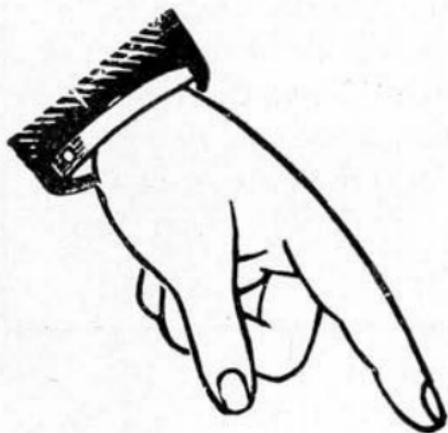


HUBERT
HUMPHREY



... looks at the record

The following comments were included in an address by the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey, Democratic Senator from Minnesota, to the delegates to the 17th Annual Convention of United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America-CIO, in Asbury Park, N. J. on September 19, 1952.

Who Won The Republican Nomination?

Now who is the real Republican candidate in this campaign? It is true that General Eisenhower won the nomination last June but it seems that Senator Taft took it away from him in September.

It wasn't Robert A. Taft who came to Eisenhower, asking, "How can I help?" It was Eisenhower who came to Taft and said: "Please help me."

Taft wrote out a long statement in his offices in Cincinnati about how Eisenhower agreed with him on practically everything and Eisenhower signed it—hardly changing a comma. Robert A. Taft—the man who almost stole the nomination last June—succeeded in doing just that in September.

Now Eisenhower may be the five-star General in the Republican Army but "General" Taft must have six or seven stars because he seems to be giving the orders now.

That Slow-Moving Elephant

Please don't be too critical of the Republicans. They are gradually coming around to the Democratic way of thinking. They are just a little slow, that's all. They make a snail look like jet propulsion when it comes to social ideas.

Now they tell us they agree with most of the programs they condemned fifteen and twenty years ago and which they fight against regularly in the Congress. You give them another twenty years and they'll want to repeal the Taft-Hartley Law, if there are any unions left.

They will catch on. Give them time. Not only that, by the time they make up their minds, we will have the old-age insurance system good enough so that they can live well while they are making up their minds.

Socialism Will Get You if you don't watch out!

"General" Robert A. Taft says that socialism is creeping up on us. He says we Americans must worry lest we lose our LIBERTY.

But the only thing I am going to worry about is the Americans losing is their MEMORY—the memory of the Republican depression and the memory of the Republican eightieth Congress.

These Republicans have called everything socialism — workmen's compensation, unemployment insurance, the eight hour day, child labor law, social security — all these things which have helped the people of this country.

They talk about "creeping socialism" now but the issue in this campaign is not creeping socialism, it is "creaking, squeaking Republicanism."

How Much Can A GOP Elephant Carry?

General Eisenhower complains that Adlai Stevenson has a sense of humor. I can see why Eisenhower would feel a little envious of having an opponent who seemed to be light of heart and of good heart.

There was a day that HE was a man of light heart. There was a day that smile was not only on his face but in his soul.

But General Eisenhower is not of light heart today; he is of heavy heart because he has tacked onto his back all the luggage and rubbish of the Republican party, and he is walking around with a load that even an elephant can't carry.

It must make a man heavy in heart to have to embrace a candidate for the Senate who has called his dear and esteemed friend General Marshall a liar and a traitor. It must break his heart to know that most of the men on his ticket, including "General" Taft, are the very same ones who tried to scuttle the North Atlantic Defense program which he worked so hard to make effective.

The Democratic Party Is Proud of Its Leaders

The Democratic Party is proud of the great men who have led it. We have as our philosopher and teacher, Thomas Jefferson. We have as our great spirit, Andrew Jackson.

But we don't have to go back a hundred years to find spirit, because within my generation and yours, the Democratic Party has produced three of the greatest leaders of all times—Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman.

What kind of leadership has the Republican party given us in recent years? They've given us Hardness with Harding, Coolness with Coolidge and Hunger with Hoover.

To Live Like a Republican ... Vote Like a Democrat

The Republicans are very clever with words. They ought to be — they haven't had a chance to do anything else but talk during the last 20 years.

They are the hungriest office seekers the world has ever known — hungry, of course, only for power — because we have given them a chance to live like Republicans by continually voting Democratic.

And they have lived well. Did you ever see a Republican underfed? They look, not like Cassius who was lean and hungry; they are like Lord Falstaff, who was fat and paunchy.

The Republicans talk about mink coats. But until the Democrats got into power, nobody ever heard of mink coats, because not even Republicans could afford them. They were museum pieces, only for the royalty of Europe.

The GOP Candidate And The Democratic Platform

Adlai Stevenson has said he would like to stand on the Democratic platform if his opponent would move over and make some room.

I knew what Stevenson was driving at when I heard the Republican candidate make a major agricultural speech in Minnesota. There, before God and man, in the wonderful sunlight of a Minnesota afternoon, the Republican Party put its arms around the Democratic agricultural program and said, "That's mine." Talk about stealing! Right there, the Republicans stole 20 years of Democratic work and planning in agriculture, without even blushing.

It is one thing to steal the Democratic platform in the sunlight of a wholesome Minnesota atmosphere; however, it's a different story when these Republican Congressmen go down in the artificially lighted, somewhat foggy chambers of the House and Senate and vote on this platform. That's where the stolen Democratic platform is tossed into the handiest garbage can.

Are We Going Bankrupt?

The Republicans moan that we are on the road to bankruptcy.

Let's look at the facts. These figures are adjusted for inflation, which was given a nice helping hand by Republican-sponsored amendments to the price control law.

In 1929 — the best Republican year — total production was 168 billion dollars. Total production in 1951 under the Democrats was 329 billion dollars. Two to one.

What about profits? In 1929 all corporations had 8-1/2 billion dollars in profits. Last year corporations made close to 19 billion dollars. And they are crying! They want a change. They must have lost their minds.

They talk about enterprise dying, little business folding up. In 1929 there were 3 million business firms in the United States. In 1951, under these terrible, socialistic, new-deal, fair-deal regimenting Democrats, there were more than 4 million businesses, and they were making money as compared to the old days.

The Great "Crime" of The Democrats

The Republicans say we Democrats are guilty of a great crime — the crime of generosity to the people. We plead guilty.

I am proud that my party is the party of compassion and understanding. It has been interested in the children and the aged. Yes, it has been interested in the unemployed, the dependent, the needy.

I say that the Republican party stands condemned before the aged of America, and the dependent and the needy, for having called our great social security system pampering of the people, for having called it socialistic and economically unfeasible, for having done everything in their power to destroy it.

I am proud that my party made it perfectly clear in its convention and through its presidential candidate that we believe in equal rights for all, fair treatment in employment, in education, in housing — regardless of race, creed or color — and we intend to take care of this unfinished business which shames America at home and throughout the world.

The Party With a Heart . . .

I am proud to defend the Democratic Party's foreign aid program which has been cynically attacked by the Republicans as a give-away program.

What we have been doing is feeding the poor. Is that wrong?

We have been healing the sick; we have been leading the blind; and we have been teaching the illiterate. Is that wrong?

We have been sending our food and our medical supplies, our teachers and doctors and our business acumen to help other people help themselves. We have been trying to give new hope to countries devastated by war, to under-developed countries where disease and starvation are rampant. Is that wrong?

There are babies alive in Italy and Greece tonight because of the milk that we sent. There are old people alive because of the Displaced Persons Act that we passed.

There is hope in the hearts of millions of people in Western Europe today because of the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Pact.

America has proven that we are big enough to do big things and great enough to be strong and yet humble.

The Wealth of America . . .

Whenever we Democrats propose a good piece of social legislation you can always count on the Republicans attacking it and voting against it. But they will finally get around to say — particularly during an election year — "Maybe this is a good thing, but it costs too much."

We should remind them that the strength of America and the wealth of America is not in its banks; it is not in its insurance companies or its factories.

The wealth and the strength of America is in its people; it is in the people who are healthy; it is in the people whose children are in good schools; it is in the people who are gainfully employed at good jobs.

The trouble with the Republicans is that they have business machines where their hearts should be. I've heard them talk about a balanced budget — but I've never heard them talk about a balanced diet for a workingman's family.

It Is Better To Serve

Our country is not seeking power throughout the world. We are seeking the opportunity to serve.

There are some eternal lessons in the field of ethics and morality—about which the Republicans talk so much and do so little—and one of those lessons is that it is better to serve than to be served. It is better to minister, than to be ministered unto. He who would be first let him be last. Whatever ye do unto the least of these ye do unto me, also.

These are the eternal lessons of our times, and a political party or a government that is dedicated to doing "for the least of these" is dedicated to a noble proposition. A government or a political party that is dedicated to service to the underprivileged and the needy is dedicated to God's work.

A political party that believes in mankind and has faith in men and women to be able to master their own problems is a political party that deserves honor and respect at the hands of the people of this republic. The Democratic Party has been, and is, that kind of party.

It's Your Move—Brother

Political power is in the hands of the people. Politics is the people's business and the people have to take care of this precious business.

I ask you to talk to people — I don't care whether you tell them to vote Democratic or not. Just speak to them on the issues, speak to them in terms of what you see and what you know, and there will be no doubt what will happen.

First, there will be an outpouring of the American people to the election polls, where the destiny of the world is in balance.

And secondly, there will be a great victory, not for the Democratic Party, but there will be a great victory for the people of the United States and the people of the world, who are looking for the kind of leadership that Adlai Stevenson and John Sparkman can give this great nation.



For Additional Copies Write To:

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum & Plastic Workers of America-CIO

URW Bldg., Akron 8, Ohio

20 for \$1.00 — 100 for \$4.00 — 1000 for \$30.00

Speech by Senator Hubert Humphrey
Before the 17th Annual Convention
United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America
Asbury Park, New Jersey
September 19, 1952

THE HONORABLE HUBERT HUMPHREY (United States Senator from Minnesota):
Thank you very much, Tom.

In the early moments of this address, I shall be quite formal, and I shall start by saying, "Mr. Owens." We better know him in Washington as "Senator Tom Owens" (laughter), because I know of no man who has a better attendance record at the sessions of the Congress than Tom. I am highly honored that he was selected to be the gentleman who introduced me here today. We are long-time friends, and I cherish his friendship. I want to pay an appropriate tribute to him, as one who truly represents the highest and the finest traditions and ideals of the American labor movement.

Tom, it is wonderful to be here with you and to share with you this opportunity of addressing this audience this afternoon.

Mr. Buckmaster, if I were to launch into a eulogy of your leadership, and of the splendid work you have accomplished throughout the years, I would not have any time to get down to the job I have before me, which is, namely, to talk about my favorite subject, politics.

All I want to say is that American labor and America itself can be very proud of the fact that there are people in positions of leadership like L. S. Buckmaster. He is a great labor leader and he is a tribute to American democracy. I am proud to associate myself with him. (Applause)

Needless to say, I am going to say a few good words about Joe Childs. He outweighs me a few pounds. (Laughter) But, even if he were not in that enviable position, I would still want to pay my tribute to him, and my thanks for his great service to his country as a member of the Wage Stabilization Board and, more than that, for his service to every citizen in this America of ours who works for a living.

Joe, it is good to see you here at Asbury Park, just as it is to see you in Washington, where you, as a member of the Wage Stabilization Board, have given great service to our nation, to all segments of the American economy. (Applause)

I could go down the list of all the distinguished officers and Board members of your organization; and, by the way, you have quite an organization. At least, the name indicates so.

When I address you, I realize that I am not only talking to the so-called Rubber Workers, but I am talking to the United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America. (Applause.)

That is a good enough name to have it on the Stock Exchange. (Laughter)

I want also to pay my respects to your Secretary-Treasurer, Desmond Walker, and to your Education Director, Joe Glazer. They have been very good to me, in terms of their personal friendship, but even more so in terms of their advice and their counsel. I respect it and I welcome it. (Applause)

Now, friends, I want to tell you something. I am not apologetic for being a politician; I am proud of it, and that is the way I represent myself today, as a politician in American democracy.

Secondly, I am proud of the fact that some of my closest friends, and those with whom I have associated myself over the years, have been members of organized labor; and I am proud of the fact that I have had their support. I welcome it; I solicit it, not only for myself but for everyone in my party, and every liberal person in America. (Applause)

I am not one who believes that labor asks for things which are impossible; I am not one who believes labor has tried to be, or has indicated itself as being, impossible. I am saying to you that much of America's welfare today, much of America's prosperity today, much of our position in the world today, is due to the fact that, in this nation, we have had a free labor movement, which has lifted up

the levels of living, and the general welfare of the people of this land; and more power to you, because there are a lot of unorganized to be organized, and there is a lot of good work yet to be done. (Applause)

I am not fully accustomed to these microphones yet. If you cannot hear me, just let me know (Laughter), because I am going to settle down now, and we are going to talk about politics.

I do not pose to be an expert in every field of endeavor; I do not pose to be even an expert in politics. My years of experience in the political arena have been limited; they have been intensive, but not extensive. My first public office was that of mayor of the City of Minneapolis, a city of over 500,000 people.

I loved those years; I have fond memories of them, and I know that people will work with political leaders or elected political officials; I know they will give you their confidence if you put your confidence in them.

I believe it was your own Mr. Buckmaster who said, "Sure, I like Ike. But the question is, Does Ike like us? We know that Adlai Stevenson does like us, and we know he is our man." (Applause)

You ought to know all about my political prejudices. There is no man alive who does not have prejudices of some sort; no man alive is fully objective. I want to be as candid with you as I can today. What I have to say to you are my own opinions; I do not have any prepared speech which somebody wrote for me. I do not need any ghosts or any spooks; there are enough of them in the Republican Party. We do not need any of them in ours. (Applause)

I do not need to have somebody put words in my mouth, or sentiments in my heart, or ideas in my mind. What I have to say to you comes from my own heart, from my own lips, and from my own thinking.

First of all, let me compliment this convention on your Resolution No. 4, which outlines your basic legislative program; and let me say that, on the very first point of your program, where you call for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Law and the enactment of an equitable labor-relations law. "Them are my sentiments"; I agree 100 per cent. (Applause)

I do not have to go around with tongue in cheek, hoping that I will fluff a word here and there, to be able to confuse you and the general electorate. I make my position perfectly clear, and the position has been made clear in the platform of my party. We stand irrevocably committed to the repeal of one of the most inequitable, unfair, and unjust laws ever put on the statute books of America, and we stand to put a better one in its stead. (Applause)

I heard, the other day, you know, the distinguished candidate of the Republican Party. I did not say the General; I said the candidate, because there is a new general in the Republican Party, Robert Aloysius Taft. He has six stars, or seven or eight now. (Laughter)

I am talking about the candidate for the Republican Party, the citizen candidate of the Republican Party. He gave a devastating attack upon the Taft-Hartley Law. He spoke at the American Federation of Labor Convention. I read his speech, and the only thing which was wrong is that he did not add up all these columns right. If he had been a student in college or in the public schools of America, and he had been doing arithmetic problems, they would have marked him zero, because he had all the facts, but the wrong answers. (Laughter)

He said the Taft-Hartley Law could be and was a union-busting law. Amen! One hundred per cent right! He went on and outlined some of the evil features of this Act, and then when he got all through with it he had to peak over--let's see, not the left shoulder, it couldn't have been the left,--it was the right shoulder, and in peaking over the right shoulder and behind him, he saw General Taft, and the General said, "Candidate Eisenhower don't add that up to repeal; just talk about revision, amendment, alterations, a la Robert Taft formula!" (Laughter)

Now, I want to say to Candidate Eisenhower that he was pretty persuasive. I am sure he convinced some of our distinguished brothers in the American Federation of Labor as to the wickedness of this law. All I ask him to do is, the next time that he goes on over to see Robert Taft, is that he convince Bob Taft. That is the guy who needs convincing -- not the rest of us! (Applause)

May I also commend you upon Resolution No. 8, Resolution No. 8, wherein this Convention calls upon the membership of this Union to mobilize their forces in the campaign to elect Stevenson and Sparkman, together with a liberal House and Senate which will enact legislation to promote and advance the welfare of the American people. This is the kind of a resolution that every trade union, every labor union in America should adopt because your future, not only your future, but your present is tied up with the policies of America.

And it is about time we woke up to the fact that this election is not going to be won by just hoping that we win it; it is going to be won by men and women such as are in this hall today, going out on the streets, in the blocks back home, in the by-ways and the highways and campaigning and working. And by the way, it isn't going to be won by silent meditation. You are going to have to have some tinkling of the coins dropping here and yon in contributions.

It is one thing for organized labor to endorse; it is fine to pass a resolution. But ladies and gentlemen, fellow Americans, elections are won by blood, sweat, and tears -- and a few dollars that are used to promote the good cause. I hope you take the suggestion in good heart and good faith. (Laughter)

I said to you that I didn't come here to apologize for my profession, which is politics, and I am not here to apologize for my political party. I am here to say a word in its behalf. Oh, let me be very candid with you. All the people in the Republican Party are not devils, nor are all in the Democratic Party saints. We have our Dixiecrats in the Democratic Party. There are scalawags in each organization. But the main thing to keep in mind is not the scrubby pine trees on the edge of the forest but the beauty of the forest itself. And I am here to point out to this audience today that the record of the Democratic Party for the past twenty years the record of leadership under Franklin Delano Roosevelt and under Harry Truman is a record that any American can be proud of! (Applause)

The other day the distinguished candidate of the Republican Party, after having visited with that jovial, genial, friendly personality from Ohio, Robert Taft (laughter), came out and said that this was no time to be cracking jokes, this was no time for levity. In a sort of a frontal attack against Governor Stevenson, of Illinois, the candidate of the Republican Party told the Governor that these weren't laughing matters.

Well, I want to tell you something, friends. I am not an expert on humor, but I am willing to wager this, that the biggest joke in 1952 is the platform of the Republican Party. That platform could put you into hysterics! (Applause) That platform is a joke -- unless the Republican Party should come into power, and then it would be a tragedy. But you know, there is

a great relationship between comedy and tragedy. And I say again that the Number 1 joke, the Number 1 laughing stock of this political year is the cheap double talk, the political hypocrisy, the ludicrous nature of the Republican platform -- which is now being snidely and cleverly interpreted away by the Republican candidate. But the Republican General, General Robert Taft, he isn't interpretating it away. He says "this is it." And there, my friends, is the boss-man.

They talk about bossism. Well, let the record be perfectly clear right now. It wasn't Robert Taft who came to Eisenhower. The statement as to Robert Taft's participation in this campaign did not come from Eisenhower. The statement as to Robert Taft's participation in this campaign did not come from the Eisenhower headquarters. It was Eisenhower who went to Taft. And it was Taft who said over the radio and to the press that his press release was written in his offices in Cincinnati, Ohio, and that hardly a word was changed. Mohammed went to the mountain to be sure -- and believe me again -- gave birth to a mouse!" (Laughter and applause)

I am of the opinion that it is time to start slugging in this campaign. We can't be ballet dancers in this fight. The time is here to call our shots and I am not interested in the gentle art of political gymnastics, I am interested in seeing that the record of performance is put before the American people and that the American people have some honest choices to make. I will tell you just a little bit about some of those choices.

I heard General Taft's speech the other night over the radio -- very interesting speech. It was a great harmony of contradictions. General Taft said, "We Americans must worry lest we lose our liberty." Ah, General Taft, let me tell you something, the only thing I am going to worry about the Americans losing is their memory - the memory of twelve years of Republicanism from 1920 to 1932, and the memory of the Eightieth Congress. If they lose that, they certainly may lose their liberty. (Applause)

Yes, they talk about "creeping socialism". My dear friends, the issue in this campaign is not creeping socialism, the issue in this campaign is "creaking, squeaking Republicanism." That is what it amounts to. (Applause) I have said it before and it is just as true today. It doesn't make any difference whether it is General Eisenhower, General MacArthur, General Electric, General Motors, or General Mills, it is all the same old Republican Party, right down the line!" (Applause and cheers.)

You know these Republicans are very clever with words. They ought to be -- they haven't had a chance to do anything else but talk during the last 20 years. (Laughter) They are the hungriest office seekers that the world has ever known -- hungry, of course, only for power -- because we have given them a chance to live like Republicans by continually voting Democratic! (Laughter) And they have lived well. Did you ever see a Republican underfed? They look, not like Cassius who was lean and hungry; they are like Lord Falstaff, who was fat and paunchy! (Laughter)

Oh I have heard this new attack that is being made upon us - "the mess in Washington." That is the new line, "the mess in Washington." Well, one of my friends, Mr. Harriman, the Mutual Security Administrator, the other day made some remarks about this, and we were talking about it yesterday afternoon. So we looked up in the dictionary the definition of the word "mess," and the Webster's Dictionary has this to say about "mess."

"Mess," and I quote now - you can get out your dictionary you can find this in the fifty cent edition or the Five Dollar one, "Mess" -- definition -- "A confused, inharmonious, disagreeable mixture of things." Now, anybody with two eyes and two ears knows to whom that refers! (Laughter) "A confused, inharmonious, disagreeable mixture of things."

Let me give you a couple of cases -- Eisenhower and Senator McCarthy; Eisenhower and Senator Jenner -- that is inharmonious, isn't it? And it seems to me that it is a disagreeable mixture of things. Confused? As confused as General Taft, the other night, who said Americans have more jobs than ever before, more income than ever before, more farm production than ever before, more industrial production than ever before -- but we are going bankrupt and losing our liberty. That is confusion compounded! (Laughter and applause)

My dear friends, it isn't the "mess in Washington" that is the issue in this campaign; it is the mess that wants to come to Washington. That is the issue. (Laughter and applause)

Now, whenever the candidate of the Republican Party can justify the political expediency of this new love feast, wrapping arms around those who have been his most vitriolic enemies, wrapping arms around those who have condemned everything that he stood for; whenever the candidate of the Republican Party can explain that to the American people, maybe he will deserve the tribute and the respect of the people in this election. How I admire Governor Stevenson, who said yesterday, "Party regularity is not the issue, but what is good for America is the issue."

How ridiculous it is to send to Washington a President committed to a foreign policy which embraces NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and then send to the United States Senate men who are committed to the destruction of NATO and to all those that support it.

The Republicans talk about many things. They are mad because Governor Stevenson has a sense of humor. Of all the phony issues that a candidate could ever pick up to use on his opponent! But I can see how General Eisenhower would feel a little bit bad about Governor Stevenson going about America with a smile upon his face. I can see why he would feel a little envious of having an opponent who seemed to be of light heart and of good heart.

After all, let's not be too mean this afternoon. I think we ought to be sorry -- for the Republican candidate. Really, we should. There was a day that he was a man of light heart. There was a day that the smile was not only on his face, but in his soul.

There was a day when his handshake was warm and friendly, but, poor Candidate Eisenhower--why, we should literally weep for him. This man is not of light heart today; he is of heavy heart, because he has tacked onto his back all the luggage and rubbage of the Republican Party, and he is walking around with a load that even an elephant can't carry. It must make a man heavy in heart to have to embrace a candidate for the Senate who has assailed his dear and esteemed friend, General Marshall. It must break his heart to know that most of the men who are on his ticket are the ones who have tried to scuttle the North Atlantic Pact and the Marshall Plan. Poor Candidate Eisenhower!

I will not be too critical. I am sorry for him, but I wish the Republican Candidate would check up on his history, because some years ago, out of the great City of Springfield, Illinois, came another great American. This great American's name was Abraham Lincoln, and even in the darkest days of the War Between the States, Lincoln found time for a practical wholesome joke. He even joked about five-star generals, if they had any in those days.

Enough of that. Let's talk about the difference between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. You know what the difference is. It is the difference between Herbert

Hoover and Alben Barkley. (Applause) It is the difference between the down-draft lips and the updraft lips. It is the difference between those who believe in today and tomorrow and those who have become experts on the past. They are the people who have specialized in returning some place. Where they are going to return to, I don't know. I know it is not to the banks of the Potomac, but they are always going back some place. (Laughter) They have been going back since time immemorial.

In 1920 it was a "return to normalcy." They have returned to Wall Street many times to get their cup filled and overflowing. They have returned many times to the Constitution, and now they want to return again to the banks of the Potomac. They are always returning, always going back.

The Democratic Party is just a little bit different. We are not returning. We live within the traditions of our Republic. We are the oldest political party in the land. We have as our philosopher and as our great teacher, Thomas Jefferson, and as our great spirit, Andrew Jackson, and we don't have to go back a hundred years to find spirit, either. Because within my generation and within yours, we, the Democratic Party, have produced three of the greatest leaders of all times, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman. (Applause)

I ask these fat homing pigeons of the Republican Party, have you got anybody of equal stature to point to? I don't think so. What kind of leadership have they given us in recent years? They've given us hardness with Harding, coolness with Coolidge, and hunger with Hoover. I guess that that is their triumvirate. (Laughter and applause)

But we, the Democrats, are guilty of a great crime, the Republicans say -- that is the crime of generosity to the people. I have never seen so many people who worried about the moral fibre of other people. They shed tears about it, and if the Government does something for grandpa and grandma, it will destroy their moral fibre. (Laughter)

But let me say right here -- I am proud that my party is the party of compassion. It has been interested in the children and the aged. I am proud that my party, the Democratic Party, has been the party of generosity. To be sure, we are interested in the unemployed, the dependent and the needy, and I am proud that my political party has been the party of understanding.

I am proud of the fact that my political party made it perfectly clear in its convention and through its presidential candidate and through the Presidents that have served us, that we believe in equal rights for all, that we believe in civil rights for all, fair treatment in employment, in education, in housing, regardless of race, creed or color -- and we intend to take care of this piece of unfinished business which shames America here and throughout the world.

I said a while ago that one of the worries that I had was lest we lose our memory or, as one great poet said, "Lest we forget!" I am not going to let you forget. I am not going to let you forget about it for a minute.

They talk about mink coats. That is what they are saying in the campaign. But nobody ever heard about mink coats because not even Republicans could afford them until the Democrats got in. (Applause and laughter) They were museum pieces before that, and only for the royalty of Europe. Why now even some of our secretaries, now even some of the people who work in the shops and factories can afford at least a little piece of mink. (Laughter)

Let the record be perfectly clear. Let the record be clear that no man in his right mind should condone corruption and no man should try to erase it by just glib talk. I am proud of the fact that as one member of the Senate, I have fought against it and I am proud of the fact that, as mayor of my city, I have a record I can be justly proud of in terms, at least of honesty; that should be expected from public officials.

But we should not elect men to office just because they are honest but because they are honest and able, and because they are filled with good spirit and filled with faith in the people and in the hopes and aspirations of our people.

The Republicans want to talk about corruption. Well, let me help them a little bit.

There are two kinds of corruption--three or four kinds, in fact--the kind of corruption where a fellow puts his hand in the cash register. That kind of corruption we know about. It must be punished and it must be stopped.

Then there is the kind of corruption, my dear friends, where those who are the so-called captains of finance, the entrepreneurs, have exploited the people. Have I heard my Republican friends talk about the plundering of our soil under their twelve long years of misrule? Have I heard them talking about plundering the public domain or stealing from children and the unborn? That is a kind of corruption.

There is another kind of corruption--embracing people in your political program and philosophy who are diametrically opposed to you. That is moral corruption, moral corrosion.

And there is still another kind of corruption, much closer to our hearts. Were the Republicans concerned about the corruption of fifteen million unemployed in America? Were they concerned about the corruption of two out of every four farms being foreclosed in America. Were they concerned about the corruption of three million boys and girls in America walking the streets and the railroads? Were they concerned about the corruption of millions of aged Americans going in want?

No, they weren't concerned about that. All they said is: "Have confidence!" "Look at the stock market." "Pay attention to Wall Street," and not only that--"Prosperity is just around the corner."

I say to you that the Republican Party stands guilty before the American people as being the most corrupt political party in the history of this land--corrupt under Grant, corrupt under Harding, corrupt under the 80th Congress, and corrupt today, in moral corrosion in its effort to win an election. (Applause)

Sometimes it gets confusion--on the one hand the Republicans condemn our program--but when we're not looking they steal our platform.

I was very much intrigued not long ago, when Governor Stevenson said he would like to stand on the platform of the Democratic party, if his opponent would stand over and make him some room. I didn't realize how meaningful that was until a little later, and I use this just to describe it.

Up in Kassoon--Minnesota--in the heart of a great agricultural section--the Republican candidate spoke to a very large gathering of farm and city people in what was a major agricultural speech, and wasn't that something. It was a sight to behold. There, before God and man, in the wonderful sunlight of a Minnesota afternoon, the Republican Party put its arms around the Democratic agricultural program and said, "That's mine!" Talk about stealing! (Laughter and Applause) Then they talk about mink coats and deep freezes. (Laughter) And have them go stealing twenty years of Democratic work.

But I would like to remind this Republican candidate that it is one thing to steal the Democratic platform out before God, man, and sunlight in a wholesome Minnesota atmosphere, but its a different story when these Republican senators and congressmen go down in the artificially lighted, air-conditioned, somewhat foggy and hazy chambers of the House and Senate and vote on this platform.

It is no Democratic platform there, friends; it is what the Republican platform says. It is parity in the marketplace. "We aim for parity in the marketplace." Maybe you are not too familiar with this technical thing we call "parity". Parity to the farmer is like fair wages to the worker. Parity simply means a fair chance, an equal opportunity for the farmer in the marketplace.

The Republican platform says, "We aim for parity in the marketplace."

Let me tell you, my dear friends. I would not mind having all the Republican Party aim at me at once; they have been blind for twenty years. (Laughter, applause)

Why, they have been aiming and aiming and aiming. They have not even killed a chipmunk, much less anything else. (Laughter)

The only reason they have the elephant as their symbol is because it has to be that big for them to be able to touch it and find it. (Applause)

But I am glad these Republicans are coming around. They are a little slow, that is all. We cannot always wait for them. They are really guilty of the slow-down they condemn others for. (Laughter)

They make a snail look like jet propulation, when it comes to social ideas.

Yes, now, twenty years later, they say, "We are for that agricultural program." You give them another twenty years and they will want to repeal Taft-Hartley, if there are any workers left in unions. (Laughter)

They will catch on. Do not be too critical; give them time.

Not only that. By the time they make up their minds, we will have the old-age insurance system good enough so that they can live well while they are making up their minds. (Applause)

My Republican friends like to go around talking about one program being socialism -- creeping socialism. But I go back to what I said earlier, friends. The issue is not creeping socialism; it is creaking, squeaking, screeching Republicanism. That is what it is, and you had better wake up to it, as you have, and go out and do something about it.

What is our record?

I had a Republican friend say to me, not long ago, "I wish you would quit talking about Hoover, Humphrey, after all, he is a former President."

I know he is, and I hold him in respect for the office he held. I say that in all sincerity. He has performed many great services for his nation.

But that does not mean I have to agree with his philosophy.

As I said to my Republican friend, "Whenever you Republicans quit bringing him out as the elder statesman of your party, to give you that new sense of inspiration, we will quit talking about him. But, as long as you keep parading him out, boy, he is a target, and we are after him. (Laughter)

I do not need to remind you of dark days; all I need do is to remind you of a day in American life which you will never forget, a great day for me, the day I cast my first vote, in November of 1932.

All I need to remind you of, is a great man who stood there and breathed confidence into the hearts and souls of millions of Americans when he said, on March 4, 1933, that all we had to fear was fear itself.

America came alive, and it kept growing with life and vitality. Why? Because Franklin Roosevelt was your friend, because he believed in the people and you believed in him, because he made government understandable to you and he gave something new to American politics. He made government and the people a whole partnership; he made it a working, cooperative apparatus; and I say to you that the issue in this campaign is whether government is to stand over you and tell you what to do, or whether government is to work with you so that, together, we can build the kind of America our people justly deserve. (Applause)

Run down the list. We do not apologize for the Wagner Act; we praise it. Without the Wagner Act, without a sympathetic administration, American labor would be fighting a rear-guard action today.

We are not apologizing for the regulation of the stock market; we did not kick all the thieves out, but we kept them registered, so you would know who they were, at least. (Laughter, applause)

We are not going to stand before the American people and apologize for the regulation of the public-utility holding companies, with their Samuel Insulls.

Look at these pious Republicans talking about corruption! Samuel Insull, the darling of the Republican National Committee; Samuel Insull, the great contributor to the Republican National Committee, who robbed the American people of over billions of dollars in stocks, bonds, and certificates.

Let them dig that one up for a while, and air it out.

No, we are not going to apologize for farm-price support; we are not going to apologize for bringing electricity to the farm homes of America under REA: we are not going to apologize for 4 per cent interest to farmers for farm credit; we are not going to apologize for Federal Housing assistance for public housing and slum clearance; we are not going to apologize for the elimination of unfair labor standards and the elimination of child labor.

No, we are going to proclaim these things, not defend them, because they are good; they are sound; they are wholesome; and they are part of the American tradition and American way of life; they are part of our nation today. Let the Republicans try to take them away from us. (Applause)

We are not going to apologize for the TVA or Grand Coulee. We are proud of the fact that here was a government under able, liberal leadership, which saw the possibilities of harnessing the energies of the great rivers, which saw the possibilities of better homes and better jobs and better industries in these river valleys.

Our Republican friends run around talking about creeping socialism!

I do not want to be too unkind, but it sounds as if they are getting kind of creepy themselves, when they talk like that. What do they mean by "creeping socialism"? The only time the Socialists gathered any real power in this country was when the Republicans were in power; the only time the Socialists had any substantial following was under the Grand Old Party, the Grand Old Privileged Party, GOP.

Let's make it quite clear right now. I am getting filled up with this double talk of those who come around prattling to the American people that we are on the road to bankruptcy. Bankruptcy!

Let's take a look at what the facts are. Here are the facts from the Department of Commerce and the Federal Reserve Board Index. These are adjusted prices, they are always talking.

Adjusted prices! In other words, these figures are in terms of the 1951 dollar.

With adjustments made for inflation, which, by the way, was given a nice helping hand with the Caphart Amendment and some of the other Republican tricks which were tossed in that grab bag called the price control law. We will get around to that too. Stick around folks. (Laughter and applause)

I will guarantee that this speech will not have to be eternal to be immortal, but I am going to make it long enough so that you will at least remember it in one part of your anatomies. (Laughter, applause)

All right. Let's talk.

What is the best year the Republicans talk about? They have to go back to 1929.

In 1929, total national production, in terms of 1951 dollars, was 168 billion. That is the best year the Republicans had.

Total national production in 1951, under Democratic administration, 329 billion dollars. Two to one!

And, again I repeat, this is in the adjusted dollar value.

Let's take a look at total personal income after all taxes!

I want to remind these Republicans, who worry and bleed and die over the tax load, that this is after all taxes, have been taken out.

In 1929 it was 125 billion dollars!

Total personal income, in 1951, after all taxes were taken out, 225 billion dollars, 100 billion dollars over the best these great, efficient, budget-balancing, tax-reducing Republicans can figure out.

Now let's talk about corporation profits because, to hear some people talk, you would think they were going broke. I know that Goodyear, Firestone, and the others are on the verge of economic disaster. (Laughter)

I remember when they were close to it; so do you.

What was the best the Republicans ever gave business in America? All corporations? What was the best they had in profits? 8 billion 400 million dollars in 1929.

What did corporations do last year in the United States, 18 billion 700 million dollars.

And they are crying! They want a change. They must have lost their minds. (Laughter)

They talk about enterprise drying up. I heard General Taft on the radio say: Why, American business enterprise is drying up. Little business is drying up.

In 1929, there were 3 million 97 thousand business firms in the United States.

In 1951, under these terrible, socialistic, new-deal, fair-deal, regimenting Democrats, there were 4 million 15 thousand businesses -- almost three-quarters of a million more free enterprises in America; and they were making money, as compared with the old days.

I will not bore you with any more statistics; I just say to my Republican friends, a good, short course in economics would be very helpful for them.

Bankruptcy! More people at work, more homes in America, more business establishments, more bank deposits.

My friends, if there is anybody in America who has a right to complain, it is those who are unorganized; it is those who have been the victims of Republican-made inflation. It is not these fat-bellied, corporation executives and Republican hirelings who are running around howling about bankruptcy and socialism. Not at all! (Applause)

I say to you, in summary on the domestic front, that American agriculture is stronger today, more productive, and more prosperous than in any one year the Republicans can point to.

I say to you that American agriculture is moving ahead, not backward; and I say to you that no farmer in his right mind can trust a party which had presidents who vetoed the McNary-Hogan Bill three times, which fought against every legislative program on behalf of the farmers.

I say to you that this Democratic Party, which now calls again for the people's support, can point with justifiable pride to being the creators of social security, to being those who pioneered the way; and I say that the Republican Party stands eternally condemned before the aged of America, and the depends and the needy, for having called social security pampering of the people, for having called it socialistic, for having called it economically unfeasible, for having done everything in their power to destroy it, even when it was being born.

We will have more social security for the American people, if we have a change to have the right leadership in the Government in Washington.

I say that no workingman in his right mind can forget that it was under the Democratic Party that the Wagner Act was passed; and it was a Republican Congress that passed the Taft-Hartley Act.

How a workingman can be for Republican leadership in the light of that record is more than I know. How people who want fair prices, how people who would like to see inflation controlled and stopped, can be for a Republican Party which, in the Congress of the United States, since 1950, has done everything in its power to wreck the Price Control Bill; how any worker can be for such a party is beyond my comprehension. (applause)

Of one thing you can be certain. On all this social legislation, the Republicans finally get around to say, "Maybe this is a good thing, but it costs too much." (Laughter)

I think we should remind the Republican leadership that there are no checking accounts in either heaven or hell; you cannot take it with you. (Laughter, applause)

I further think we should remind them that the strength of America and the wealth of America is not in its banks; it is not only in its insurance companies; it is not only in its factories. But the wealth and the strength of America is in its people; it is in the people who are healthy; it is in the people whose children are in good schools; it is in the people who are gainfully employed at good jobs; it is in people who are given fair and equitable treatment in the marketplace. In other words, the emphasis in American democracy must be upon the people. Put first things first.

If we put first things first, my dear friends, we are bound to come out all right.

My Republican friends seem to be addicted to double-entry bookkeeping. They have business machines where their hearts should be. They can only think of one thing, a balanced budget; they never have thought of a balanced diet for a workingman's family. (Applause) They can only hear the pleas of landlords, never of those who are tenants.

They can only hear the pleas of those who want 8 per cent interest, rather than those who would like money at a fair rate.

But, again and again, they come back and say, "But it is the taxes; it is the cost."

I heard the distinguished candidate of the Republican Party talking, out in Iowa, I believe it was. He said our country is literally going bankrupt from these tremendous budgets.

Yet, I want to remind that candidate, I want to remind this distinguished former general of the United States, that he, Dwight Eisenhower, was down before the Congress, pleading for more money - not less - for American defenses, less than six months ago. (Applause)

I say to you that, if Mr. Eisenhower thinks we need less of a budget now, he has the obligation to tell us that the international situation is that much better. He knows as well as I know; that 87 cents out of every dollar in this budget, 87.4 cents out of every dollar this Government spends, goes for the security of our nation.

He also knows, my dear friends, that only 12.6 per cent of this total budget, 12.6 per cent goes for the rest of the civilian economy of America. He knows that governmental expenses have been reduced for the civilian areas of America. He knows that the reason this budget is big is because of the menace of international communism; and he, above all, knows that we cannot reduce taxes or reduce the budget as long as Joe Stalin increases his power and his strength around the world. I say to him, he must not talk like this! (Applause)

I am not being partisan. I am putting my country above my party. I tell you, no man in his right mind can promise the American people an immediate reduction in taxes. I tell you, no man in his right mind dares reduce the defenses of this nation. And I tell you that the facts speak for themselves, and the facts are 87.4 of every dollar goes to the defense of America and for the payment of veterans' benefits and for the interest upon our war debt. And I challenge the Republican Party to tell America how we can defend ourselves at bargain-counter prices. (Applause)

Let's talk about foreign policy. I come here to praise the foreign policy of this nation. I come here to tell you that we spent \$450 Billion to win a war -- \$450 Billion and thousands of lives to win a war. And yet, the Republican leadership today is unwilling to see America spend even a relatively paltry sum to win a peace. Peace does not come with the cessation of hostilities. Peace does not come when the guns quit firing. Peace comes with hard work and with sacrifice, with planning. It comes with the willingness of a people who believe in freedom to work, to nourish the spark of freedom throughout the world; and to guard it, and to protect it.

I tell you that your country and your government has done a great job. Oh, we have made mistakes. It is a tremendous undertaking. We have had people in the employ of the government who broke their trust. But we had to recruit people overnight from all over America. America had to grow up overnight. America had to take on the responsibilities of world leadership overnight.

You know what we have been doing -- and I want to tell these penny-pinching Republicans right now that what we have been doing is right. I will tell them that their miserly dollars will do them no good if we lose this struggle.

What we have been doing is feeding the poor. Is that wrong? We have been feeding the poor, we have been carrying the message in political, economic terms, of the Christian-Judicial doctrine of "Feed the poor".

We have been healing the sick; we have been leading the blind; and we have been teaching the illiterate. Is that wrong? We have been sending our food and our money and our medical supplies, our teachers and our doctors and our religious leaders, and our business acumen to help other people help themselves. We have been trying to give life to a world that was almost dead. Is that wrong?

And I say to you, rather than the Republican leadership condemning this program, they ought to get down on their knees and ask Almighty God to forgive them for the wickedness of their ways! (Applause)

I am proud of the fact that the Democratic Party has fought communism, and not just talked about it. I am proud of the fact that we have identified the real culprits, and not those that have been created by some who seek power. I am proud of the fact that my President, Harry Truman, and the Secretary of State of this country, the Honorable Dean Acheson, have had the courage to face up to those who would damn them and condemn them! (Applause)

And the Republicans have been given every opportunity to know what is going on. John Foster Dulles -- when did he get to be such an expert? He got to be an expert when he got a job from a Democrat. He got to be an expert when we made him one. He was still writing pamphlets until the Democratic Administrations, in an effort to make the policy bi-partisan, invited in what the Republicans considered to be their ablest Lieutenant.

Now, friends, I want you to go away from this meeting, not just with partisan spirit; I want you to go away recognizing that these are difficult and hard days. There are no easy answers, none whatsoever. But one thing is perfectly clear -- that if America is to bear the burden of leadership and world responsibility, we must be strong at home, not only strong in our banks and our finance, not only strong in our production, but strong in our unity, and strong in the faith of democracy. We must believe in one another. We must believe that local and civic government can work. We must really believe in human equality, and we must practice it. A nation is no better than its faith. And a nation without faith perishes. And I say to you that what the Democratic Party has done more than anything else is give the people faith in themselves and in their government and we are trying to build faith throughout the world. I am proud of our work throughout the world because there are babies alive in Italy and Greece tonight because of the milk that we sent. There are old people alive because of the Displaced Persons Act that we passed. There is a hope, at least, in the hearts of millions of people in Western Europe today because of the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Pact. America has proven to herself and to the people of the world that we are big enough to do big things, and that we are great enough to be strong, and yet humble.

We are not seeking power. When I say "we" I mean America. What we are seeking is the opportunity to serve. I have heard my Republican friends talk about the lack of ethics and morality.

Let me say to you that there are some real eternal lessons in this field of ethics, and one of those lessons is that it is better to serve than to be served. It is better to minister, than to be ministered unto. "He who would be first, let him be last. Whatever ye do unto the least of these ye do unto me, also."

I tell you that those are the eternal lessons of our times, and I tell you this--a political party or a government that is dedicated to doing "for the least of these", is dedicated to a noble proposition. And I tell you that a government or an administration or a political party that is dedicated to service to the under-privileged, and the needy, is dedicated to God's work. I tell you that a political party that believes in mankind and has faith in men and women to be able to master their own problems is a political party that deserves honor and respect at the hands of the people of this Republic. And I tell you that I represent today that kind of a political party. (Applause) I tell you that the Democratic Party is that kind of a party. (Applause)

Now, go from this hall dedicated to do your job. Go from this hall remembering that you are working for a cause that is based upon humility and humanitarianism. Go from this hall today realizing that maybe there have been mistakes made, but they have been the mistakes of commission, not of omission. Go from this hall today realizing that political power is in the people, that politics is the people's business and that the people have got to take care of this precious business.

And I ask you to go back to your Local Unions -- I don't care whether you say to them to vote Democratic or not, all I ask you to do is to speak to them on the issues, speak to them in terms of your resolutions, speak to them in terms of your own teachings, speak to them in terms of what you see and what you know; and if you do that, my friends, there will be no doubt what will happen.

First, there will be an outpouring of the American people, the sovereign people of this nation to the election polls, where the destiny of the world is in balance. And secondly, there will be a great victory, not for the Democratic Party, but there will be a great victory for the people of the United States, and the people of the world who are looking for the kind of leadership that Governor Stevenson and John Sparkman can give as the leaders of this great nation.

(Prolonged applause, cheers, delegates rising.)



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