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REPUBLICANS TURNED BACKS ON AMERICA'S VETERANS, SENATOR HUMPHREY SAYS

The Republican Administration "turned its back" on America's war veterans, with a "shameful record" on veterans' affairs during the past two years, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey declared yesterday in an address at the annual Fall Festival at Lake Elmo, Minnesota, sponsored by Lake Elmo Post No. 5725, Veterans of Foreign Wars.

As examples of the Administration's "lack of concern" for war veterans, Senator Humphrey cited:

1. Opposition to increased pensions;
2. Increase in interest rates on G. I. loans;
3. Attempts to nullify veterans' preference laws in Federal service.

"All of these were sharp blows keenly felt by our ex-G. I.'s", Senator Humphrey said. "However, the unkindest cut of all was the blow struck against those least able to bear it -- our sick and disabled veterans.

"When Congress was considering appropriations for veterans' medical and dental care, it was obvious that these services were in a pitifully inadequate state. There were 24,834 veterans on hospital waiting lists. These included 2,378 TB cases 11,779 psychotic cases, and 25 paraplegics. Yet, at the same time, there were 2,300 beds vacant for lack of funds. In addition there were some 300,000 approved service-connected dental cases that could not be treated until more funds were made available. In an attempt to alleviate this situation the Democrats in Congress suggested an increase of \$10 million in appropriations for veterans' hospital and medical programs. I am sorry to say this was killed, when 91% of the Republican membership in the House of Representatives voted against the increase.

"Following this action, the Army Times Vet-Letter said '. . . the evidence is becoming crystal clear that veterans' rights, benefits and privileges may be headed for the expendable category . . .'

"How quickly we forget!

"We have a debt to our injured and disabled servicemen which never can be repaid. Dollars and cents cannot compensate for the sacrifices they have made. The money we may have saved through skimping on medical care is an offense to the conscience of every American who loves his country", Senator Humphrey said.

Senator Humphrey commended the VFW Post for sponsoring the Fall Festival as an outstanding example of community service, and urged the Veterans to keep "politically alert" as a part of good citizenship.



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