

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

UNITED STATES COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

COUNCIL OF MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS MEETING

Address by Senator Humphrey, Minnesota

Tuesday, May 15, 1956
New State Auditorium
2:35 to 4:40 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D. C.

THE CHAIRMAN: [The Honorable Morehead Patterson]

It is a great privilege to welcome Senator Humphrey of Minnesota to this meeting. He is vitally interested in disarmament and will talk more on that very important subject. As you know, a great deal of the work of disarmament is done within the Commission of the United Nations. Most of these efforts in disarmament are under the banner of the United Nations one way or another. And, too, it is particularly appropriate that we know more about these tremendous efforts and the plans that are being made to further the interest.

Senator Humphrey.

[Applause]

SENATOR HUMPHREY: Thank you very much, Mr. Patterson. Ladies and gentlemen, this is what you call coming in rather rapidly, and I would imagine you would hope leaving rather soon. I do have to get back to the Senate where we are debating an important bill, but I was looking forward to the opportunity of coming here to say "hello" and to wish you well in your work, and that opportunity has been afforded me.

Now maybe I should give you a word of pedigree or background before I start off on my remarks: It has been my privilege to serve as a Member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in the 81st and 82nd Congresses; to be a Member of the Subcommittee on International

Organizations of the Committee on Government Operations; and, presently, a Chairman of the Subcommittee on United Nations Affairs; a Member of the United Nations Charter Revision Subcommittee. And, also, the Chairman of the Special Subcommittee on Disarmament. And I am going to discuss the work of that particular committee with you briefly today.

First of all, may I say that it is a rare privilege to be able to meet with the representatives of organizations that are affiliated with the United States Committee for the United Nations. I speak for myself in this expression, and I am extremely grateful and pleased that there is such a committee as yours trying to bring about a better understanding of the United Nations, the Charter of the United Nations, the agencies related to the United Nations, and the program of the United Nations. I think it is most important that the American people understand our participation in this great international organization; also, that we understand both its assets and its limitations.

I digress to say that sometimes those who are overly enthusiastic may have oversold the United Nations in terms of what it can really do under the provisions of the Charter, and then, may I say, that some of those who are overly pessimistic, I am confident, have undersold the United Nations. I would like only to speak for myself, and not as an official representative of my committee,

3 when I say that to those who say "Get the United States out of the United Nations, and the United Nations out of the United States" that they are really talking about something that is not going to happen; they are expressing a sense of cynicism and pessimism which is unworthy, may I say, of the natural optimism of the American people.

Now there are not many occasions when so many groups with varied interests, such as gathered here, join forces. This, I believe, is a tribute to the place which the United Nations has come to hold or to have in our national thinking, and in our national respect. I realize that the United Nations, its activities and actions, the actions which it takes or does not take, are often viewed differently by the representatives of groups assembled here, and by the organizations from whence you come. What I believe you are agreed on, however, is the need for the United Nations to exist, and the need for the United Nations to succeed in helping to make a better and a safer place in which to live, or, to rephrase that, to help to obtain the conditions which are conducive to a just and an enduring peace. And you may have noted that when I speak of peace, I speak of a "just" peace--a peace with honor, and a peace based upon freedom, and a peace that is meaningful and enduring.

You are also united, I am sure, on the importance of maintaining strong public interest in and awareness of

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the United Nations. There is no substitute, ladies and gentlemen, for an informed citizenry. The wisdom and the virtue of a people will truly determine the future of the nation. Without an alert and articulate citizenry, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for us in the Congress to weigh and to legislate on matters relating to foreign policy, and matters, in particular, affecting the United Nations. Similarly, I sincerely believe that the policy-makers in the State Department would be handicapped, in fact, obstructed in formulating United States' positions, without the understanding and the support of the American people relating to these policy decisions. I really make a special plea here today for a more articulate and informed citizenry on the matters of foreign policy. We can have our political differences over a host of domestic issues, but we must have a very clear and mature understanding of our responsibilities as a nation in the great area of international relationships.

Now the need to stimulate and provoke continuing attention in the United Nations is the reason that you have gathered here today. It is the reason for the establishment of your committee. It is why the President of the United States has declared by proclamation a United Nations Day, and why we observe a United Nations Week. I certainly want to be among those who pay tribute to your good work and to the outstanding job which the United States

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Committee for the United Nations does and carries on year after year. I really want to emphasize what tremendous gratitude the nation, the Government, yes, the United Nations, owes to you and to your organizations, which have contributed so much to the understanding in the discussion of public issues centering around United Nations' activities.

I wish especially to stress this now, as you are about to embark on your individual and cooperative efforts to plan the observance of United Nations Day and United Nations Week for 1956. I suspect that most of the work that you do and the time that you give, yes, the funds that you raise, goes relatively unnoticed and sometimes unheralded. You ask for no thanks, and because we are all very busy and terribly rushed in this America of ours we frequently fail to give any thanks. So permit me, prematurely, to thank you for what you are doing. Yet, the appreciation, I am sure, is in our hearts and in our minds, for bad or for good. As a Senator, I am sure that I don't get that kind of should I say "treatment" where you go unnoticed. My deeds are always--at least in many instances--noticed by someone; sometimes, I would hope, with a sense of appreciation, but other times "noticed," and I shan't characterize how. [Laughter] I am not usually able to go about my business, and I speak for other Members of Congress, quietly and unobtrusively.

But, seriously speaking, the different expressions or experiences that we are in, going about our work, illustrates one of the distinctions in our respective functions. My job, and the job of a Member of Congress, is to represent you, to represent you to the best of one's ability, to know your interests, and to be sure that you have an opportunity to present your views, and to make those views known and effective. Many, if not all of you, are familiar with the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the United Nations Charter. We just recently submitted the final report of that subcommittee, which was accepted by the full committee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The subcommittee, in its two years of existence, held 18 days of public hearings in 11 cities; the hearings and the testimony covering over 2,000 pages, presented by over 500 persons. To quote from the report: "This marked the first occasion that a general question of foreign relations had been treated in such a fashion."

Now what is meant by that is that we took the matter of Charter Review of the United Nations out to the people. I have always had a philosophy about the people's relationship to the Government, which tells me that it is just as easy for the representatives of the Government to go out to see the people as it is for the people to come down to Washington to see the representatives of the Government. And may I say that when the representatives

of the Government go to see the people they get paid expenses, and that's much more than sometimes the people receive when they come to see the Government.

Now the attempt of the Subcommittee on the United Nations Charter to explore a problem of foreign policy through extensive public hearings held throughout the country was a great success. I believe all of us who served on that subcommittee felt that the experience was extremely valuable and rewarding. I know, to me, that it was very rewarding and inspiring. It was rewarding in terms of obtaining views, ideas, suggestions, criticisms, of a very wide and representative cross-section of the American people on the question of United States policy towards the United Nations. While not everyone will, or should, be expected to agree with the conclusions of the subcommittee, I believe that the conclusions do, on balance, represent a fair evaluation of the issues involved in the subject matter of Charter Review, as provided under the terms of the Charter. I think these conclusions, and the hearings will be of immense value in the formulation of United States policy in this matter. Members of the Congress feel an obligation to gather public opinion; to sense it, to evaluate it, and we sort of feel that in our role as a part of the policy-making function of this Government, particularly in the field of foreign affairs or foreign relations, that public hearings and public testimony are

of immense value. I have been one in Congress that has looked askance upon too many executive sessions. I happen to believe that the matters of defense, and our international relations are of such vital importance that the American people ought to be informed to the maximum--always, of course, reserving the right, where there are matters of highly secret nature, for those to be discussed, if discussed at all, in closed or executive sessions, but those sessions should be at a minimum. I have noticed of late a tendency on the part of Government to have more and more closed sessions. And closed sessions lead to lack of information; inadequate information--which leads to distortion of fact, which leads to rumor, and half-truths, and suspicion, and doubt.

The more that you can have open public hearings, fellow Americans, the better will be the understanding of the problem. Now this doesn't mean, of course, that you are going to have, necessarily, always a happy and solemn and serene discussion of these issues. It may mean that controversy is sharpened, but it does mean that, if there is a majority for a point of view, it will be an informed majority; and, if there is a minority, it will be a minority that has had the privilege of arriving at its minority position out of free and open and unfettered discussion and availability of information.

I digress again to say that I sometimes feel that I am not doing justice by our work in the area of our relationships with other countries when I talk about foreign policy. I should like to express my own personal point of view again. There is no such thing as foreign policy in the Year of our Lord 1956. "Foreign" means removed; it means something that is apart from us; it has negative connotation; it, apparently, would indicate that it is something that is distasteful. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I suggest that in 1956, and in the midst of the 20th Century, the kind of world in which we live--that what we are talking about is international policy, and international relations, rather than foreign policy which would indicate to our citizenry that this is something that is away from us, removed from us, and how we do wish that "it didn't have to be." Well, it will be, and, therefore, we had better be prepared to understand it and discuss it as mature citizens.

I have mentioned the work of the Subcommittee on the United Nations Charter, not only because I felt you were interested in the outcome and the appraisal of its efforts, but because, more than that, I wanted you to know the work that your Congress attempts to do: that subcommittee became to some extent a forerunner of the most recently created Foreign Relations Subcommittee--the Subcommittee on Disarmament. Actually, it is more, as you

10 will see, than a Foreign Relations Subcommittee.

The Senate Foreign Relations Special or Subcommittee on Disarmament, of which I am privileged to be Chairman, was set up as a result of a resolution which I introduced in the 84th Congress, the first session, in an effort to coordinate the activities of the Congress with the Executive Branch of the Government in this all-important area of disarmament policy. It is a strictly bi-partisan committee, and has been in operation for several months. The 12 members of the subcommittee--6 Republicans; 6 Democrats--were appointed from three of the standing committees of the Senate: Foreign Relations, Armed Services, and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Our Terms of Reference, which are stated in Senate Resolution 93, are rather broad:

"The subcommittee is instructed to look into the proposals for disarmament submitted before the United Nations, both by our own country and others; to examine the United States disarmament policy in light of national security requirements; to seek the views of the people on reduction and control of armaments; and to study the implications of disarmament for the domestic economy, and its impact and relationship upon and to the foreign policy or international policy of our Government."

No one, I am sure, would question the fact that

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disarmament is one of the most serious and difficult and complicated problems of our time. And, yet, may I say, with equal candor and vigor, it is without a doubt the greatest challenge to our statesmanship and our political know-how and understanding. We are all aware--I hope, at least, that we are all aware--that the next war, if it comes, will be a nuclear war, a thermonuclear war, and anything worse that you can think about. Those who would survive such a holocaust--if there would be any survivors, and that is questionable--will find the rebuilding which faced the world after World War II a simple and cheap task compared to what we would face or what would face us after World War III. The testimony before our subcommittee by Admiral Strauss and the senior member of the committee of the Atomic Energy Commission brought this vividly to our attention. We now know that there is no limit to the size of a bomb that can be created or the destructiveness of its power--there is neither a theoretical nor a practical limit. I can only say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that we are faced with grave problems. The horrors of nuclear warfare and the problems surrounding the attempt to eliminate the ability of nations to wage such a war are so immense that many of us put these problems to the back of our mind simply because they are so immense. We, apparently, prefer to work on more immediate short-run problems on which a solution is more likely to be found. I am frank

to tell you that the immediate and short-run problems are, of course, important, but we must always keep in mind the gravity of the situation that confronts us. And while I am not a pessimist--in fact, I am naturally an optimist--I would be less than frank and candid with you if I did not say that I think we are living in the most precarious times of our existence. I am not one that is being deluded into believing that the world in which we live today is a peaceful world, even though there may be an absence of the booming of guns for the moment. The violent turbulence of social disorder, and the tremendous tensions and grievous problems which confront peoples and nations are, indeed, of an explosive character.

Now the creation, therefore, of the Disarmament Subcommittee has, I believe, helped to move this disarmament problem into the forefront of our thinking. I would like to think that is the case. I wish that more thoughtful consideration was being given by every American on this subject. We in Congress have introduced and supported and passed resolutions on the subject of the control and reduction of armaments more than once in the past decade, but, today, for the first time, we have undertaken to explore and to study this problem fully. The subcommittee has first attempted to learn what the current thinking is on the part of the Executive Branch of our Government. Our intention has been to clarify in the public record the

approach of those in the Government who are responsible for formulating disarmament policy, and I understand that Governor Stassen already addressed you. I had within the past week a meeting with Governor Stassen, following his representation of our country's interests and policies at the London Conference on Disarmament. We have had Governor Stassen before our committee and it has been my privilege, as Chairman of the Committee, to work closely with him and other members of the Executive Branch in discussing these disarmament policies.

The subcommittee also wanted to obtain the estimates of Government officials as to the intentions of other countries with respect to armistice control and disarmament. Most particularly, of course, we have sought information about the Soviet Union. The morning headlines told us something that had been rumored for some time, and I know that the hour is late and I am not supposed to take too much time, so I shan't digress to tell you what I think of some of the things that happened over the last 24 hours, except to say this: that whether we Americans like it or not, the Soviet has momentarily seized the initiative in the field of disarmament discussion and, apparently, disarmament action. I have reason to believe that it is not as meaningful as it appears. But I would suggest to my fellow Americans that there may be areas in the world that are not quite so politically sophisticated as some who

seem to feel that they are such as in Washington. This may have an impact which could well undermine the NATO, could well put back our foreign policy many steps, and weaken us in many areas, unless we are prepared with policy decisions, affirmatively stated and positively organized, to match and to not only match but to gain the initiative ourselves in terms of world leadership and better understanding of other peoples and our own policies and decisions.

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SEN. HUMPHREY (Cont.): Most particularly, of course, in our Subcommittee we have sought, as I said, information on the Soviet Union. The Subcommittee has held five public hearings at which Mr. Stassen, Mr. Dulles, Mr. Wilson, Secretary of Defense, Admiral Radford, Admiral Strauss and the senior member of the AEC, Mr. Murray, have testified. Also we have heard from Mr. Strelbert of the United States Information Agency. These hearings have been very valuable. I think it can be said, insofar as the Government has stated its position, we on the Subcommittee also note and have published the hearings so that the American people may know it. All of the witnesses have been cooperative and have tried to be helpful. We feel that as members of the Subcommittee we, too, have tried to be helpful.

The Secretary of State gave brilliant testimony and many of you are familiar, I am sure, with the fact that I have not always spoken so glowingly of the man who heads the State Department, but I want to commend him for his testimony before our Subcommittee, because I thought it represented a willingness to explore this problem and to explore it with a sense of imagination and determination and a sense of creative judgment. Sen. Flanders also gave the Subcommittee the benefit of his views.

You may know that the senior Senator from Vermont is practically the Senate's dean on disarmament. He has spent many years of his busy and very interesting life studying this issue and his ideas are extremely worthy of the most careful attention of every citizen in this country, and particularly of our responsible Government administrators and executives.

The Subcommittee has held to date one hearing outside of Washington, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where we had a panel of participants the likes of which I have never witnessed before in my life. They were excellent, well-prepared, and came forward with ideas that we had not heard here in the Nation's Capital, an evaluation of disarmament proposals that were thought-provoking and informative. Sen. Pastore and I attended and we had, as I said, one of the most interesting sessions I have known since entering public life. I got a real thrill out of going to Boston. For seven hours I heard one witness after another put forward new ideas, penetrating analyses representing the disarmament problem.

These public hearings will be continued. One will be held in Washington on June 8 and I hope that you can attend and let our Subcommittee know of your desire to attend or to testify. Another will be held in

Minneapolis, Minnesota on June 16 under the auspices of the World Affairs Center of the University of Minnesota. We hope to hold hearings in other parts of the United States so as to jell public opinion, or at least, should I say, to ask for an expression of public opinion.

Now, interspersed with the hearings the Subcommittee is having prepared for public print a number of staff studies on various aspects of the questions relating to limitation and reduction of armaments. The first of these studies covered the organization of the executive branch to handle disarmament policy. The second consisted of a chronology, the selection of important historic events and significant events in the history of disarmament over past decades. There are several staff studies now within a few weeks of completion. Much of this staff work is being done by scholars who have volunteered their services, or whose services are being compensated, and by specialists in the Reference Service of the Library of Congress. So you can afford to read them with confidence, may I say, and if you are a student in the area you will feel that it is worthy of your trust and your time.

Many of you present today have already contributed to the work of the Subcommittee in understanding

this disarmament situation and the challenge that it presents to us. I hope others of us will do likewise. I really and truly solicit your advice and counsel. I would hope that the American people would concentrate their attention upon this very important problem. We welcome your ideas and your comments.

It would perhaps be fitting that some of the discussions and meetings planned by the organizations represented here be devoted to disarmament because, as has been noted, all of our official discussions on disarmament are carried on through the United Nations Subcommittee on Disarmament, or Commission on Disarmament, and we are a very prominent member of that body. Our Government is in the forefront of responsibility for that particular activity of the United Nations. I appeal to the citizenry, to the groups that you represent, to do some grass-roots thinking about this, some creative thinking on your own part, and to give us the benefit of your analysis and of your proposals.

Almost all of the negotiations on the issue to date have taken place under the auspices of the UN, the very UN that you are calling to the public's attention in the United Nations Week and the celebration of United Nations Day. The fact that we and other major

powers continue to meet year after year to tackle the disarmament question is in a great part a reflection of the interest taken in it by all members of the United Nations.

The Subcommittee on the United Nations Charter enabled us to gain some perspective on the years of operation of the United Nations. Now our hope is that a little more hard thinking spent on disarmament may result in brighter prospects for a solution of this vital problem, brighter prospects in disarmament without--and may I make this crystal clear--ever sacrificing for one minute the vital interests of our own national sovereignty, the vital interests of our own national security, but at the same time a solution which all of us prayerfully seek, deeply want and, may I say, desperately need.

I am grateful to this audience and to the leadership of this conference for permitting me to make these few remarks, and it is a joy and a pleasure and a genuine privilege to be a part of your program. Thank you very much. [Applause]

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Senator, for your inspiring talk on this momentous question.

I want to introduce now Col. Alfred G. Katzin, Deputy Under Secretary General for Public Information of



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