

**PRESS
RELEASE**

Americans for Democratic Action

1341 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.



DEcatur 2-7754

Page H. Dougherty
Director, Public Relations

FOR RELEASE:

SUNDAY
MARCH 31, 1957

Excerpts from an address
by

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
before the Banquet at the Tenth Anniversary Convention of
Americans for Democratic Action
Willard Hotel, Washington, D. C.
March 30, 1957

THE UN: HIGH ROAD OR DEAD END?

... Whether we are discussing the United Nations or any other significant aspect of our international policy, we shall hardly ever, any more, face black and white decisions. Today our choices are almost always between more, or less, attractive shades of gray.

As far as I am concerned, one of the chief causes of the spotty and deteriorating reputation our country has earned in the field of foreign policy in the last few years has been this Administration's inconsistent and abrupt swings from sweetness and light to storm and disaster.

The serious international problems we face do vary in intensity, but they have existed and still exist with a consistency that requires something better than constantly shifting policies of expediency leaving our own people and friends abroad bewildered.

The American people will back this Administration or any administration in asserting real world leadership for the cause of peace, but only if we are told the truth rather than fed palliatives. We cannot exist on an alternating diet of tranquilizers and pep pills. We cannot look at the world through rose colored glasses one day and then be asked to change them for smoked glasses the next.

At times the President has seemed to regard the United Nations as some kind of vast Univac machine into which difficult problems may be fed and automatic answers provided. This approach in a sense is flattering to the United Nations, but even world organizations can be flattered to death.

A tendency to impose tasks on the United Nations beyond its capacities does a disservice to the U.N. and its future. Reliance on the United Nations in the absence of both policy and leadership is self-defeating. Without steady injections

of specific American policies and hard-working leadership at the U.N., Univac won't register anything except a compromise of other peoples' policies and other peoples' leaders.

The United Nations represents the early states of the evolution of mankind to international law and order. So tenacious is the desire of man for peace, so strong is this impulse for law and order, that within the last twelve years the United Nations has withstood the most terrific shocks and assaults upon it. It has survived the advent of the atomic age and the revolt of a quarter of the world against the colonial system. I earnestly believe that had it not been for this organization, the world might well be in its third and final war.

The United Nations is far from perfect. But all the hopes of man to evolve a just international economic order, to advance human rights, to stop aggression, to disarm, to establish a reign of law, are bound up in the United Nations. It is for us to apply the test of imagination. It is for us to give the United Nations our leadership.

One reason we need the U.N. is to provide a constructive focus for this tremendous force of nationalism which otherwise would be running wild. The U.N. does not control or thwart nationalism, but it does provide a framework in which nationalism can find its proper and responsible place in a world society that is becoming increasingly interdependent.

Under these circumstances, I think we should rejoice that these new governments, still absorbed with the birth pains of nationalism and revolution, nevertheless want to join and plan an active role in the United Nations. This is the most significant fact of all. Together with the dignity and security which their U.N. membership brings them, these new countries are developing a sober sense of responsibility earlier than they might otherwise. Our responsibility in turn is to work with them -- giving guidance, help and sympathy. We should cooperate, not dominate.

A sheriff is one man in a community of many, but he wears the badge which is the symbol of the community and men do not attack him easily. So I believe that a small, available United Nations Force, rushed to a scene of trouble before the trouble gets out of hand, could, in most cases, help prevent violence. I do not believe that there is any government in the world today that would fire upon the symbolical force of the community. Had such a force been in existence when the first appeal came from Hungary, it might have been dispatched there quickly. I doubt if even Soviet commanders would have fired upon it.

Our foreign policy needs a new emphasis. It needs the emphasis of economic growth, and progress, along with national independence for free people and nations. Military containment must give way to economic and social development.

Finally, my friends, there is the simple problem of how to exert positive leadership without the necessary leaders. I do not need to tell an ADA audience that for the effective formulation and conduct of world policy we need more than laws, institutions, materiel and money. We need people -- people with the education, background, understanding and sympathetic fellow-feeling essential to the tasks now facing us.

Our contribution to progress can come only from a substantial body of Americans whose knowledge makes it possible for them to have informed proposals for the solution of extraordinarily tough problems.

The Administration is tinkering around with the mechanism -- education -- and not coming up with very imaginative proposals even on that.

We ought to be grappling with the main problem -- the supply of trained brains. We desperately need a national assessment of the magnitude, characteristics, and distribution of our current supply of trained intelligence. We need imaginative estimates of future needs. We need programs to meet those needs.

In the last analysis, the success or failure of the United Nations, of the economic hopes and aspirations of the underdeveloped countries, and of most of the other major challenges facing this generation may depend upon the impact exerted by our leadership, ^{upon our} or/~~of~~ failure to lead.



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