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Address  
at  
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Dr. Reid  
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by  
Hon. Hubert Humphrey (D.-Minn.)  
Thursday, June 12, 1958

"The Legislator looks at the nurse"

When you read newspapers and magazine, you see a great  
many references to the "new look" in French and American  
fashions for women.

Sack

You see pictures of the latest creations in dresses -- the  
chemise dress, the so-called "sack", the balloon skirt.

But, so far as most of the people of the world are concerned,  
the most important "look" in dresses -- is not the "chemise"; it  
is still the white uniform of the nurse, with her insignia of  
professional qualification.

Nurses  
look

The "angel in white", as she has so often been called,  
today, is performing one of the most important roles at home  
and abroad in this second half of the 20th century.

It is indeed an honor to be speaking before this great  
assembly of representatives of the nursing profession. As many

of you know, my interest in the field of health is more than

that of a dillettante. In fact, I myself am still a

registered pharmacist, and I have long been interested in health

work. Since my entrance into political life, my concern for all

branches of professional health activity has remained strong.

So it is not only as a politician, but, in a sense as a member

of your own field that I will be talking to you this morning.

The responsibility of professionally trained people in

guiding and influencing public policies is a great one. For

medical personnel, there is an additional responsibility for

the well-being and protection of all those people whose

physical welfare has, by virtue of your training, been

committed to your care.

You, of the American Nurses Association, and all its state

affiliates are well aware of your responsibility. Your sensitivity

AM  
Pharmacist  
long interest  
in health  
matters

Your responsibility  
for guiding  
policy  
toward  
Care of People!

legislator

#

to events in every aspect of medicine and welfare is both

laudable and inspiring. My personal experience with repre-

sentatives of the ANA in the field of legislation has shown

an intelligent and critical awareness of the many ramifications

of legislative activity. I know that you will be interested to

hear about some of the health measures on the current political

scene.

It is difficult to cover all the relevant material in twenty minutes. I shall try to treat ~~these~~ <sup>two</sup> fields:

I. Domestic Legislation.

II. The role of the nurse in international health work, and

~~III. A specific proposal for disarmament which relates to your own general field of interest~~

I. DOMESTIC LEGISLATION

My Goals as A Public Servant

The 430,000 nurses actively employed in Continental United

*Do independent thinking*

*Housing Soc Sec.*

States are as important, or more so, as any occupational group in these United States.

Those of our nurses working abroad, under various government programs, are likewise as significant a group of leaders as any serving this Nation overseas in the cause of freedom and ~~man's~~ well being.

As a public servant, I am vitally interested in what nurses are accomplishing as well as the challenges they face, here on the home front, and overseas.

I am interested that:

- a) there shall be more nurses
- b) better paid nurses with improved employment conditions
- c) still better trained nurses to meet changing needs, and
- d) <sup>that be in ever</sup> nurses held ~~in~~ higher esteem by a grateful population.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE "STAPH" OUTBREAK

Before I get into a review of some of the changing trends in nursing, as such, I want to refer to one of the major problems which you nurses face; <sup>and with</sup> which hospital administrators and physicians ~~face.~~ <sup>are confronted.</sup>

I refer to what is perhaps the number one medical mystery which has come so dramatically to the fore -- the outbreak of new resistant staphylococci (stafflocokee) - which defy present anti-biotics.

↳ I need not remind you that the Nation's newspaper and magazine have been full of stories concerning the considerable number of STAPH cases in hospitals.

↳ As you are aware, the problem has emerged in maternity wards, involving both mothers and newborn infants; it has affected our senior citizens in hospitals, as well as other patients.

↳ A great job is being done to unlock the secrets of this mystery.

↳ What is responsible for the new STAPH? How is it transmitted?

What is the relationship to our present programs of administering anti-biotics? What can be improved in hospital procedure and hygiene?

Now, We are going to find the answers to these questions, just as we have found the answers to problems of the major infectious diseases which for so long plagued man.

The combined resources of the medical profession are now at work. To my way of thinking, the Federal government can do more and should do more in cooperation with the medical profession.

This is the sort of problem against which the total community of the healing arts should be mobilized.

I don't have the slightest doubt that we are going to conquer these new fiercely resistant STAPHIS.

The only question is how large a toll in human suffering and illness will first be taken?

In this, as in other medical problems, we are in a race with time; each passing day involves more patients.

If there is any single quality, therefore, that I would urge my fellow legislators to adopt, it is a sense of urgency on this and similar problems.

*Health Problems need our Urgent & Continuing Attention*

NEED FOR MORE FUNDS FOR NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Within the next few days, the Appropriations Bill of the Health, Education and Welfare Department will be coming up on the Senate floor. (Sen H. H. ...)

*Admitted asked \$-3 million*

*Deane asked for 7 million for Professional Nursing traineeships under Public Law 911*

I need not remind you that the Congress has rightly given

increasing amounts to the HEW Department.

I should like to single out as especially deserving of still more funds, the great research arm of HEW, the National Institutes of Health.

In the present reduced budget, \$211 million has been proposed. A National Citizens Committee has suggested, however, that this be increased to \$299 million; and I, for one, certainly look with favor upon this latter suggestion. (Predict it)

*Between 40 + 50% all med. Research expenditures lifted out*

In doing so, I do not for one moment underestimate the tremendous contribution which has been made by other medical research organizations of this land. On the contrary, I have the highest praise for them.

But I say that, in a Congress which will <sup>appropriate</sup> ~~allocate~~ well over \$73 billion, we can afford to spend at least \$300 million to help eradicate the ~~and~~ scourges which affect every single one of us, directly or indirectly.

And So I would urge that we enable the National Institutes to be <sup>in a</sup> still more powerful position to meet ~~with~~ either STAPH or any other micro-organism menace.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING

The ~~tremendous~~ shortage of nurses and other public health personnel in the United States has long been a recognized problem. It is time that we took positive action to have adequately trained people to meet this need.

Recently I introduced a measure for Public Health Training

which would authorize \$1 million per year for five years for  
an emergency program to increase trained public health personnel  
at the post-graduate level through scholarships. This bill also  
included matching construction grants for new schools.

At the present time there are 11 accredited schools of  
public health in the United States and its possessions. Six  
of these schools are supported by private philanthropy and  
five by the taxpayers of their states <sup>respective</sup> ~~or of Districts and~~. I  
feel that since our nation gains from the training which these  
schools afford, the financial cost of maintaining them should  
be better equalized. In another measure. I have asked for  
\$60 million for five years to provide matching grants for  
construction at medical and dental schools. Certainly every  
effort should be made to provide the best possible educational  
facilities for the higher training of members of the medical & nursing  
profession.

HILL-BURTON ADVANCES

Another growing need in this country is for more and better hospitals and hospital equipment. The unprecedented population growth since World War II and the continued obsolescence of existing facilities have accentuated this problem.

Indeed, on the basis of population forecasts we may expect almost a fourteen percent population increase for the past eight years. This means that were there were 100 Americans in a given hospital in 1950 there will be 114 this year. The Hill-Burton program has strengthened and inspired hospital construction all across the country.

Yet since 1948 the average annual appropriation for Hill-Burton has been about ~~\$77~~<sup>77</sup> million dollars. Only once, in 1950, was the full authorized amount of \$150 million dollars made available to the States. This is despite the accelerating need for general hospitals. With these facts in view, I have

Total of \$630 Million to Non Govt Hospitals!

75% all Hosp Govt

Also Emergency Fund

been urging increased appropriations for Hill-Burton, and a  
three year extension of the program beyond 1959.

SERVE RURAL AMERICA'S HEALTH NEEDS

A legislative development which I should like to commend  
is the increasing interest in serving the needs of the Nation's  
smaller hospitals.

Perhaps we Americans have been preoccupied too much with the  
great imposing medical centers ~~of the land~~ to the detriment of  
interest in the smaller hospitals. That is why I am <sup>pleased</sup> ~~glad~~ that  
more student nurses are now being <sup>trained</sup> ~~trained~~ in smaller hospitals.

I am thinking particularly of the unmet needs of our rural  
population, as served by the small hospitals of our land.

In my judgment, there is a whole new frontier in rural  
health which still awaits us. The great benefits which our  
city people have come to enjoy, thanks to modern medical practice,  
must now be fully shared with our country people, as well.

Forand Bill - ~~Henry~~ Tracy Bill  
Health Care for the Aged - See See  
today's hosp - today nursing  
home care

A third trend which I should like to commend is the development of the concept of Progressive Patient Care.

As you are familiar, specialized nursing care is now being given to patients in different stages of their illness. There is increasing recognition that one type of nursing care is needed for the patient on the critical list, as against a different type of supervisory care for the patient who is in the convalescent stage and who need only be helped to adjust for his return to private life. This sound adaptation symbolizes, I feel, the flexibility and resourcefulness of U. S. nursing.

Time is not available to attempt to look at some of the other trends in nursing on the home scene.

INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF NURSE

The importance of domestic health legislation in meeting the responsibilities of professional medical people for the citizens whose physical and mental welfare is dependent upon them cannot be minimized.

But the United States must also maintain every aspect of its leadership in world affairs. This certainly includes the field of Health, Education, and Welfare. The American Nurses Association has evidenced its awareness of this responsibility. This awareness has been demonstrated by active support of the International Council of Nurses, sponsorship of international exchange of nurses, cooperation with public and private agencies in the United States responsible for international programs for professional personnel, and support of the United Nations and especially the World Health Organization.

AMERICA'S REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE FOR FREEDOM

Let me point out that we Americans should not shrink from the concept of revolution. The War of Independence in 1776 was one of the most significant and beneficial revolutions which has ever occurred on the earth's surface.

The revolution of the American Colonies, which we will be celebrating once again in less than a month on July 4th, still circulates the world with its inspiring message.

↳ It was the revolution of the oppressed against the oppressors, the revolution of the men who believed in their individual, God-given rights, against those who believed in the Divine right of kings.

↳ The world still looks to us for the concepts of peaceful constructive revolution. Revolution against what? Revolt against whatever enslaves the minds or the bodies of man.

Any form of totalitarianism  
enslaves both the mind and the body.

↳ But there is another evil enslaving force; it is the slavery of superstition, the slavery of the witch doctor, and the slavery of disease which holds men within the bondage of illness. It is against that bondage that you nurses serve so effectively.

The very existence of nurses, as such, in many of the underdeveloped countries is, in itself, almost a revolutionary fact.

As you know, ~~it had been long though~~ <sup>it has been believed</sup> in many of these lands, especially in Asia, that nursing was not an attractive profession, particularly for educated women of well-to-do families.

NURSES' SIGNIFICANCE IN UNITED STATES AID PROGRAMS

But now, thanks, in large part, to the efforts of the World Health Organization and the ~~efforts~~ of America's International Cooperation <sup>(Foreign Aid)</sup>

Program -- the very attitude toward nurses, as such, has changed for the better.

So far as our American foreign aid program is concerned, let me say this: --

We must always remember that the nurse has one crucial advantage over almost any other type of aid technician that we send to a foreign land. The nurse actually gets into the home of the individual, or she demonstrates to mid-wives, or to student nurses who, in turn, go into individual homes.

Thus, we have a person-to-person contact in the home, a human bond between individuals, which is almost beyond comparison.

THE REVOLUTION IN WOMAN'S STATUS

Meanwhile, there is a revolution occurring in the underdeveloped world, affecting women's status itself.

For centuries, women in many of these lands have been considered as virtual serfs of their husbands. But today, women are rising step by step up the ladder to full equality. And it is the nurse who <sup>and the leader</sup> ~~is~~ helping them ~~to~~ rise ~~to~~ to their rightful position in society.

I am proud to emphasize that the United States is in the lead of this effort of recognizing women's higher status, as nurses, both through our bilateral program under the International Cooperation Administration, and our multilateral effort through the World Health Organization.

FRUITFUL WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

As you know, there has been meeting in Minneapolis <sup>the</sup> the Eleventh World Health Assembly. It is my pleasure to serve as a member of the American delegation to W.H.O. Tomorrow, the Assembly is scheduled to **complete** its Sessions.

It has been a most fruitful Assembly. It has been high-lighted by the sound American offer of over \$300,000 to the W.H.O., for a study by which that organization ~~will become~~ <sup>can be</sup> in a better position to accelerate research into two of the principal killers of the world today: cancer and heart disease.

In Washington, in your Congress, a Senate - House Conference Committee is right now putting the finishing touches to the Conference Report on the 1958 Mutual Security Bill.

That bill, ~~I say~~, contains two provisions which I personally ~~has prepared~~ <sup>sponsored</sup>: One emphasized the importance of increased health research throughout the world; the other makes it possible for more information on health and health care ~~to be~~ to be translated, abstracted and disseminated abroad, so that it will become freely available among the nations.

But, thus far, we have only scratched the surface of what we can do and what we should do for improved health throughout the world.

In conclusion, I can only reiterate that, as a legislator and as a public servant, I feel that the needs of your profession must be constantly borne in mind by those of us who have the privilege to serve in public office.

The "revolution of expectations" continues in our own country and abroad.

The individual nurse, too, has her rightful expectations. She has a right to anticipate fairer return financially for her years of education and training.

She has a right to anticipate a position of rightful status and prestige in the eyes of the community.

And, I believe that, in the years up ahead, she will increasingly realize these and other expectations.

As I stated at the outset, the newspapers may be full of stories of the "new look" in fashion--the chemise dress and the "sack"--but to me, the white uniform, <sup>the most</sup> cap and insignia are still just about the most important apparel which can be worn by any woman, at home or abroad.



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