

WINNING FOR A PURPOSE

Keynote address by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey
at Wisconsin State Democratic Convention, in
La Crosse, Wisconsin, Friday, June 13, 1958.

It is wonderful to be with you, here in the great
badger state of Wisconsin. You are a mighty fine neighbor
-- especially when you began to see eye to eye with us in
Minnesota on how to achieve our traditional liberal objec-
tives through the Democratic Party.

You know, we might have our differences in football
season -- but each election day is bringing us closer and
closer together.

That is as it should be. We share together a
great midwestern political tradition -- the liberal tradition,
the tradition of the voice of the people, making itself felt
on public policy.

Wisconsin breathed new spirit and heart into Demo-
crats everywhere last year, when you sent us Bill Proxmire

to the United States Senate.

You did more than just send us a great new Senator, exemplifying all the best of what we as Democrats stand for and fight for. You started Republicans on the run, -- and they have been on the run ever since.

There is a new spirit of enthusiasm growing among Democrats everywhere. They sense victory in the air -- for 1958 and 1960 too!

If there were any doubts about it, the tremendous Democratic upsurge in the recent California primaries provided convincing evidence that the Democratic Party is on the march, and not going to be stopped.

Let me share a secret with you. You folks in Wisconsin helped start this tide -- and sent rock-ribbed Republicans scurrying out of Washington to hustings all over the land.

But California's election is proving they can not
undo in campaign desperation all they have done to the
country in six years at the helm in Washington.

Panic has hit the Republican ranks. They proved
as split up in California as they are in Washington, where
nobody knows just what the Republican Party stands for these
days, modern or otherwise.

Perhaps you don't realize what an inspiration your
Wisconsin victory last summer was to Democrats elsewhere
in the nation.

I don't usually quote from my own remarks of the
past, because there is usually too much that needs to be
said about the present. But last September I went out to
California to address a huge Jefferson-Jackson day dinner
in San Francisco. I told them about Wisconsin -- and tossed
them a challenge. Here is what I said:

"There is good reason for the Republican panic.

"We opened the political season a bit early for them, with Bill Proxmire's knockout punch to the Grouchy Old Party in Wisconsin. We gave them an advance look at what's in store in 1958.

"Wisconsin's voters turned their backs on Absentee Ike, the President who would rather be popular than right.

"They bluntly repudiated do-nothing Ezra Taft Benson, the Secretary in charge of liquidating agriculture.

"They turned where voters always turn when they are in trouble and need vigorous, progressive, constructive leadership -- they turned back in droves to the Democratic Party.

"After what happened in Wisconsin, even some of our most rock-ribbed Republicans are awakening to the fact that people want a change in the political climate in Washington.

"You can help give it to them, by changing the
political climate in California."

Those are quotes, right out of my California text
-- before I threw it away and gave them the kind of fighting
pep talk we Democrats sometimes need.

Well, they apparently took my word for it -- and
set out to do the job. They are changing the political
climate of California. And we are going to change it
further in Wisconsin, too -- as well as elsewhere throughout
this nation.

Wisconsin must finish what it started last year.

It must re-elect by an overwhelming vote of con-
fidence, the brilliant, energetic, and capable young United
States Senator you sent to Washington last summer, a great
liberal who has already made his mark in Washington for his
dedication to agriculture, small business, education, the

elderly and the handicapped, the working men and women of
your state. We need Bill Proxmire. We need him to help
provide Government with a Heart, ~~instead of bank balance~~
~~government that is heartless.~~

We need your great Congressmen, too. We need you
to return Clem Zablocki, Henry Ruess, and Lester Johnson -- all
courageous liberals --
to continue safeguarding the best interests of Wisconsin's
workers, its farmers, its sportsmen and conservationists,
its small businessmen, and its fathers and mothers who want
an opportunity for their children to grow up in a world
of peace, instead of a world of conflict and war.

But that is only the start of the work set out
for Wisconsin's Democrats this year.

-- that able and experienced liberal leader --

You need to send Gaylord Nelson to your statehouse
as Governor, and give him a Democratic legislature to work

with to effectively serve the people of Wisconsin.

You need to send us some more Democratic Congressmen like those who are already asserting great liberal leadership in the House.

Wisconsin's Democrats can do it. You have already shown you have the confidence of Wisconsin's voters.

You are just beginning to inject new life and spirit into the great liberal tradition that once prevailed in this state, but was almost crushed to death when it tried in vain to find an outlet in the Republican Party.

It is encouraging to learn that many old time Progressives are beginning, at last, to ~~have learned a lesson, and are turning~~ their backs on Eastern-dominated Republicanism, ^{inc} to look with new hope and inspiration toward aggressive, progressive Democratic leadership for Wisconsin.

As our enthusiasm spreads over the taste of victory

at the polls, I hope we pause, however, to remember and
recollect, and pay deserving tribute to those hardy
pioneers of democracy in Wisconsin who served so faithfully and well to keep alive the spirit of liberalism in
Wisconsin during its darkest hours in this state -- the
men who served your party as officers when the prospect
for victory was far from bright, and who carried your
banner into battle as candidates when they felt there
was a chance to advance your cause, even though they might
not advance themselves.

Even as an outsider, I could run down a long
list of names who deserve to be saluted tonight. You
know them as well as I do, perhaps better. Let's not
forget those who helped pave the way for the progress
you are now making.

You know, we went through this same experience
in Minnesota.

We even have coined a pet name for those who helped prepare the way. They are called the "Moat Fillers". Just like in the old days of storming what seemed impregnable castles, it took a lot of bodies to fill the moats before others who followed could climb over the walls to victory.

Let's not forget your "moat fillers", as we focus our eyes on brighter prospects ahead.

We are on the threshold of new Democratic victories this fall. And it is becoming increasingly evident that the burdens and responsibilities of guiding the nation's destiny may well pass into Democratic hands in 1960.

As American citizens, as well as political partisans, we must face the sobering responsibility of making sure we are adequately prepared to assume that mantle of leadership.

It is not enough to be critical of the weaknesses and failures of existing leadership. It is not enough to decry the collapse of our prestige abroad, and the wavering confidence in our economy at home, as necessary as it may be to alert the American people to the dangerous price we are paying for these failures.

Pericles, the great Greek statesman, once said:

"I am more worried about our own failures, than the plans of our enemy."

We can well heed his advice today. For that is just another way of saying that what we Democrats need to do is to better prepare ourselves for the responsibility of leadership -- and find in our midst men sharing our convictions who are best qualified for leadership -- rather than just spending our time pointing out the shortcomings of Republicans.

Actually, the American people know these shortcomings without us having to constantly remind them.

They see those shortcomings almost daily in a foreign policy that is ever more based upon expediency and reaction, rather than on principle and positive goals.

They see those shortcomings daily also in an economy that is now in the throes of a recession.

They see those shortcomings in the failure to keep pace with the needs of our educational system, knowing the danger that such neglect entails for our entire future.

They hardly need us to remind them any more of the weaknesses of Republican leadership.

~~Even the Republicans in Congress are scurrying~~
~~from the President's sinking ship.~~

~~That is really a shame --- because as weak a President as Ike has been, it is true that he is the best the~~

~~Republicans have been able to produce in a long time --~~

~~and far better than anything they have to offer for the~~

~~future.~~

It is ~~also~~ true that Ike has been of little help
to those of us in Congress, either Democrat or Republican,

who looked to the President for ~~the~~ leadership. *We had every*

leadership
right to expect in the struggles of the present and the

past session -- for effectively combatting the recession,

for urgently needed school construction, for adequate de-

fense and meeting the Soviet space challenge, and yes,

even for an effective civil rights bill to which the

Republicans give such political lip-service. *We didn't get it.*

~~Always, at the crucial moment, President Eisenhower~~

~~has been absent, silent, uninformed, and uncertain about~~

~~what he wanted -- or changes his mind about what he asked~~

~~for.~~

It might be amusing, if it weren't so tragic.

Our nation begs for leadership. We need a President who will exercise his responsibilities, not just exercise.

We need a President with the courage to make decisions -- whether they are popular with everyone or not.

The nation is paying a costly price for collapse of the President's leadership -- at home and abroad -- in Lebanon, in France, in Latin America, or in Arkansas, Detroit, and yes, among the jobless closer to home in Duluth, Minnesota, or Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Fumbling, bungling, indecision has marked our handling of both foreign and domestic affairs. As a nation, we face grave risks in both fields from abuse, misuse, or lack of use of Presidential power.

However, the American people are never long satisfied

with commiserating about mistakes of the past, or of the present. Rather, they are asking for leadership for the future.

As Democrats, let us meet that challenge. Let us talk about what we want to do -- and what we can do for our country.

Knute Rockne, the famous Notre Dame coach, when he saw Army backs running for big gains through the center of the Notre Dame line, once turned to two substitutes on the bench and said, "Can you stop them?" The substitute guards replied, "We will try!".

But that was not enough for Rockne. He gave this classical reply to the eager subs: "Go sit down. I have two boys in there now who are trying. What I want is two men who can do it!".

Now, what we Democrats need to do is not merely
just try.

We need to design a program for America that will
do the job that needs to be done -- and we must have the
will and the majority to carry it out.

We must start asserting ^{positive} leadership ourselves, and
come forward with constructive alternatives to counteract
the drift and indecision hamstringing our national leader-
ship today.

We must be true to our American heritage in
international relations, and walk boldly with heads high,
toward constructive objectives for the good of all humanity.
We must act with pride in ourselves, and confidence in the
rightfulness of our cause -- instead of timid and wavering
reaction to increasing Communist initiative.

We must be willing to face the economic challenges
now confronting us with the same boldness of determination,
and the same faith in democracy's ability to put its house
in order.

in order. .We cannot retreat into timidity and hesitancy,
hiding behind a reluctance to face the facts, refusing to
come to grips with reality.

These are the challenges we face, and that all
Americans face.

We, as responsible Democrats, can best meet them
by asserting a constructive influence in our society, in
every walk of life, as good citizens and as patriotic
Americans.

You have exemplified that spirit in Wisconsin,
by providing your state with responsible political
leadership concerned with issues, not just office-holders.
You have exemplified it by sending us men like Bill Proxmire
to Washington. We need more like him.

Your Senator and your Democratic Congressmen are
the kind of new leaders the Democratic Party is producing

throughout the nation -- and the kind of leadership we need.

We must have more like them in the Congress -- and in our statehouses, too, to adequately prepare ourselves, as a responsible political party, for assuming every greater burdens of responsibility in the years ahead.

More is at stake for all of us, than just personal political victories -- and I am sure your Senator and your Democratic Congressmen would be the first to agree.

If we are to be true to ourselves and the political party in which we believe, we must dedicate our lives to winning more than elections, as important as they are. We must dedicate our lives, our energies, and yes, our fortunes, to winning for our country the all-out struggle which we face for the survival of freedom.

Vital to that struggle is immediately rebuilding our own economy to full productive capacity.

It is time we take off our blinders, and see what

is happening. The Soviet Union's Sputniks, if nothing else, should have made us realize that we are facing a foreign power with tremendous scientific knowledge, productive capacity, and know-how.

We can no longer afford to remain complacent. In the past year alone, it is reported that the Soviet economy expanded by ten percent. If the present trend continues, the Soviet Union will match us in the entire economic field within a generation.

We cannot afford to permit this recession to continue, to risk the very real threat of a depression, for a depression here can amount to a major Communist victory. It could be more important than winning the missile race.

We cannot let this recession undermine and weaken our position of world leadership, as it is already threatening to do. We cannot let it weaken our capacity to maintain a program of strength in the field of national security and

foreign policy.

The American people want immediate leadership in halting this recession, before it is too late. They want preventive action now, rather than more costly cures later.

They want action for the sake of our own jobless and financially distressed; but they know even bigger stakes are involved. We cannot have our economy faltering at a time it is on trial before the world, in a competitive contest with Soviet state capitalism.

Actually, we need to do more than just stop this recession. We need to plan for economic growth, development, and expansion -- because we have an expanding population, and we have great world-wide commitments of long duration.

We are engaged in a struggle with worldwide Communism that will not be over in a short period of time.

We are going to be tested for possibly decades to
come.

Under such circumstances, we cannot long afford
the mammoth waste of our human and material resources going
unused as a result of this tragic recession.

For a nation as wealthy as ours, in a world where
countless millions live in utter poverty, not to be
utilizing to the fullest its industrial facilities and
trained work force is shameful. And yet the Administration
continues to sit on its collective hands.

Time is rapidly running out for the Administration,
and the Congress, to take actions to stem the business
decline. The American people want and need more than
'chins up' statements, and assurances that action will
be taken if and when necessary.

The American people will be asking us -- and we

better be asking ourselves -- what are we Democrats going
to do about it?

Have we the courage and vision to tackle boldly
and aggressively the task of building an expanding economy
that will provide full employment and fair rewards for all,
whether he is a farmer, worker, or businessman?

Are we keeping our sights on the urgent needs of the
aged and the handicapped, the less privileged in our midst,
who need a "Government with a Heart"?

Are we ready to mobilize the support that is necessary to assure adequate school facilities and decent teachers' salaries so that proper educational opportunities can be provided for our children?

Whether we come from cities or the country, are we
determined to see that America's family farmers are no longer
relegated to the Bensonized humility of second-class economic

citizenship, and instead, are provided with decent opportunity
to share fairly in the nation's progress?

Are we willing to stand up and fight for the preservation of our great natural resources of water, timber, and
land -- and willing to invest what needs to be invested in
developing these resources for the maximum benefit of the
public's good in generations yet to come?

Are we ready to boldly explore the tremendous
potentialities of peacetime uses of atomic energies, and
see that the blessings of science are dedicated to the
good of all mankind instead of being channeled only into
weapons of destruction?

Are we ready to practice what we preach, at home
and abroad, in giving full meaning to democracy through
respect for human dignity and human rights of all, regardless
of race, color, or creed?

Are we as ready to invest in the "works of peace" throughout the world, through extending the helping hand of health, food, and friendship where ever it may be needed, as we are ready to pour billions into weapons of destruction?

Yes, we may need some soul searching of our own.

These are but some of the questions we as Democrats need to ask of ourselves, as we go before the American people asking for a vote of confidence. And we need some answers too.

Some of us have dedicated our public service to facing these challenges, and seeking the answers. We need the help and support of every liberal-minded, progressive spirited citizen, in Wisconsin and elsewhere.

We need to make the Voice of the American People heard in the policy-making counsels of our government, whether in the executive or legislative branches.

You can help raise that voice in this convention.

Perhaps out of your own deliberations, out of the work of your own platform committee, will come some of the encouraging guidance and inspiration we need to answer these pressing problems that confront us. And surely, out of the great vitality making up the Democratic Party across this land, can come together the kind of positive answers the American people are crying for to meet and conquer these great challenges of our time.

We must work for leadership with vision and faith -- faith in the American people.

As Democrats, we can be proud that we have been the party of growth, progress, courage and faith, down through the years, in historic struggle after struggle between the entrenched forces of economic privilege, and the well-being of all the people.

We are the party of growth and progress today,

instead of the party of fear and timidity. We look ahead,
instead of backward.

But we can only win -- ^{only} and deserve to win -- the
public's full confidence when we keep foremost the well-
being of people, all people -- at home and abroad. We must
gear our objectives to human aspirations, domestically and
internationally. We must truly be the Party of the People.

For a government unconcerned about its own people,
is in a poor position to bid for leadership of people of
the free world.

That is one of the basic reasons why we have no
effective, total foreign policy for the United States today.

It is because a conservative government is incapable
of coming to grips with a worldwide revolution and devising
bold, creative, flexible policies. How can the conservative
politicians who oppose TVA, public power, health insurance,

and even unemployment compensation, really have their hearts in flood control in Africa, and village development projects in Asia?

How can conservative politicians who belittle planned policies and programs here at home, cooperate effectively with the governments of many new countries while national economic planning is required?

How can our generals, corporation lawyers, and big businessmen really get in tune with a world revolution? How can the Hollisters, Hoovers, and George Humphreys, possibly symbolize the hopes and aspirations of the uncommitted world?

After all, it is the essence of a conservative government that it is dedicated to the status quo and the conservatives who are directing United States foreign policy have dug in behind the policies of their predecessors, re-trenched on some of them, and in any event have refused to

move with the movement of events. It is this status quo, containment, Maginot line mentality of the Eisenhower-Dulles administration that has enabled the Soviet Union with all of its limitations, to outflank our positions on the political front, on the economic front, on the technological front, and leave American foreign policy seriously exposed and weakened.

A foreign policy which is carried out on many fronts simultaneously is the only kind of policy that makes sense in today's world. Widescale, short and long term foreign economic assistance and investment; expanded and revitalized world trade, a strengthened United Nations and other international institutions; greater acceptance of, and reliance on, international law; a vastly greater exchange of persons; greater respect and concern here at home for the rights and liberties of individuals; the strength and growth

of our own economy -- all of these must be pursued vigorously
and wholeheartedly, all the while we are pursuing just as
world
vigorously and wholeheartedly the solution of/political
conflicts and the control and reduction of armaments.

These things we must do, for the sake of all humanity.

These things we must do, to live up to the great
heritage of our Democratic Party -- and to deserve the
trust our nation's voters are bestowing upon us in ever-
increasing volume.

Our victories will be hollow indeed, unless we
win for a purpose: the purpose of more effective leader-
ship, for peace and progress.

The time to prepare for it is now.



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