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Remarks to  
THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE  
By  
Senator Hubert H. Humphrey  
Sacramento, California  
April 24, 1959

It is a pleasure to return to California.

Actually I -- along with thousands of other Democrats -- have plans to be out here in July, 1960 -- in Los Angeles, to be specific. But I find the magnetism of California irresistible, and, like many other Minnesotans who have been drawn to your state, I decided not to wait.

It is one of the greatest honors of my public life to appear before the California legislature, and I am deeply grateful for your invitation.

As a fellow legislator, I can well appreciate the tremendous problems that face a legislative body in a dynamic and fast-growing state. Representative government finds its heart in legislatures, which most directly represent the people.

000695

- 2 -

You and I know that the process of legislation is one of the most delicate and difficult in the art of government.

I am tremendously impressed, as are many millions of Americans, by the magnificent record Governor Brown has established in his first few months in office. He has faced up to what is obviously a serious fiscal problem, and with your cooperation and counsel, I am sure that together you will solve it. Surely Governor Brown will rank among the great governors of the Golden State.

And I enthusiastically acknowledge to you here today, again in common with many, many Americans, that the roster of great governors of California -- indeed, of great American leaders -- carries the name of the present Chief Justice of the United States, the Honorable Earl Warren.

It has been my good fortune within the past few days to visit the States of Washington and Oregon. Very soon I shall stop off in

000696

- 3 -

Utah and Wyoming on my way back to Washington, D. C. But no trip to the West is complete -- does not even begin, some might say -- until one visits California.

Here in the great Central Valley, flanked East and West by mountains of surpassing grandeur, one senses the charm and attraction of this bountiful and industrious land.

When a person travels West these days he is just following a trend. This trend shows up in many ways. Among the most important business of Congress in the past year has been the creation of two new States -- Western States -- Alaska and Hawaii. The geographic center of U. S. population moves Westward with each official calculation -- pulled farther toward the Pacific by the growth and expansion of the American West in general and California in particular. A national magazine has embarked on a series of articles devoted to the winning of the West. Already California

has moved ahead in the space age with its missile factories and its counterpart to Cape Canaveral at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

But the crowning symbol of westward migration was the way California has plucked out those two Eastern prizes -- the Giants and the Dodgers -- amid the anguished Eastern cry, "we wuz robbed."

My own party has developed a distinctly Western accent. It has given recognition to the growing influence of the West by choosing Los Angeles as the site of its national convention next year. However much the Republicans might like to honor you likewise, they seem to have an East-West conflict of their own which has resulted in Chicago getting all those Republican dollars next summer.

I should not neglect to mention, though, that the Republicans have honored one of your former members, Senator Thomas Kuchel, by naming him Assistant Republican leader in the U.S. Senate.

A moment ago I mentioned Alaska and Hawaii. I want to say parenthetically that admission of these two States to the Union has been of immeasurable benefit to our foreign policy. By granting statehood to these two territories, we have again demonstrated to the world the true meaning of democracy: that no people need any credentials of race, religion or creed to be accepted into the community of the United States of America.

To me, California symbolizes America's future, her greatest hopes.

For California is a social cross-section of the nation. Here are gathered peoples of all races, religions and origins, living together with a remarkable absence of strife or friction.

You have marked geographic diversity in your state -- towering mountains and flat, fertile valleys; lakes and deserts.

You even have a North and a South, but happily you exhibit -- to the visitor at least -- no signs of civil war.

California's way of life is an example to the rest of America. Indeed the strength, vigor and pioneering spirit which it represents is the answer to the repressiveness and deadness of spirit of the Soviet Union.

The answer to the Russian Bear is the Golden Bear of California.

You here in the West -- and particularly in California -- have cared about and mastered the problems of living with other people, respecting their opinions and traditions, fostering and taking pride in the diversity of your people. For this, you deserve the respect of the nation and of the world. This is America at her finest.

Symbolic of this is the passage by this legislature, under the leadership of Governor Brown, of a measure to assure equal opportunity in employment for every person, be he rich or poor, black or white, Catholic, Protestant or Jew. For this effort, I salute both you and Governor Brown.

000700

- 7 -

I respect and admire your vitality and your eagerness to meet and solve problems. You seem unhampered by convention or shibboleth or by the doubters who so facilely catalogue the obstacles but seem incapable of devising the answers.

To me, the doubters hold sway altogether too much in America today. Their appeal is to the timid and the cautious in us, not to the venturesome or the daring.

When they view a problem, they see only the difficulties; they are blind to the challenge. And when no real obstacles exist, they build them out of epithets and shibboleths, such as "socialism" and "dictatorship" and "bureaucracy" and "regimentation."

This is not the way America or California has become great. The history of your state tells of strong leadership that has met problems head-on and found solutions for them.

This nation and this state face new problems, big and difficult problems very different from those we overcame in the past. In part,

000701

- 8 -

these problems spring from our very affluence; in part by the "explosion" of population which has accompanied it.

Our affluence has caused us to spend generously in some directions, meagerly in others.

We spend abundantly for bigger, better, more powerful cars -- far faster, in fact, than we provide the roads and streets and parking places to accommodate them.

We have perfected the means of making the air in our homes cool and dry, but many of our cities still wrestle with the problem of stifling, choking smog.

As a nation we spend billions to fill our children's lives with television; but we begrudge the spending of millions for the building of better schools or the improvement of teachers' salaries.

We value our recreation, and as individuals and families, we spend generously on our vacations. But we are not so eager

to spend the money needed to make our streams clean and our parks ample to take care of our growing numbers.

There is an unevenness of effort today, and one of the urgent problems that faces all of us in public life is to correct this imbalance.

Other problems arise from the irresistible growth of population -- a problem that will press more severely on California perhaps than on any other state in the Union. With every month that passes, California's population increases by some 40,000. It is estimated that by 1975, this state will have nearly 20 million citizens.

This, I suppose, is the penalty you pay for having an ideal climate and abundant opportunity for pleasant living.

These problems will not be solved without looking ahead, without planning for the future.

Now for everyone except the Federal Government, planning is considered a virtue.

000703

- 10 -

Parents plan for the education and security of their children.

Businessmen look ahead to plan new expansion, new products,  
to anticipate new conditions.

More and more localities have their planning commissions and  
staffs.

But at that point, the logic of planning seems, to many  
people, to come to an abrupt stop. Planning by the Federal  
Government seems tantamount to original sin. The same is true,  
to a degree, of planning by the states.

We will yield to such thinking only at our peril and to our  
future regret. For problems of the future will not solve them-  
selves.

There is , for example, the problem of overcrowded cities and  
expanding suburbs. This brings with it myriad difficulties of  
transportation and taxation, but no problem so acute as that of  
having public facilities keep pace with private expansion. Where

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there is the demand for more and more housing, there is not always the means of providing the streets and sewers and water and lighting -- in short, the public underpinnings of community development.

At the Federal level, I have been pleased to join with Senator Clark of Pennsylvania in urging the establishment of a Federal Commission on Urban and Suburban Affairs, to make a comprehensive survey of the problems that come with the rapid urbanizations of America.

Here in California, your Governor has shown his awareness of these problems by appointing a Commission on Metropolitan Area Problems -- one of the first such state commissions in the Nation.

Only by this type of planning at all levels of government can we hope to meet the needs of urban development.

Another problem for many communities is the presence of Federal installations that demand services from the community but pay no taxes to it. I know this is a particular problem in your state,

000705

for Californians have always led the list of witnesses in support of a bill I have been urging for ten years, to provide in lieu tax payments by the Federal government to communities where Federal installations are located.

This principle is already established in the Tennessee Valley Authority. It should be made universal.

I am happy to report to you that after ten years of effort, there are good prospects for the enactment, by this Congress, of this measure so urgently needed by so many California communities.

Effective community planning must go hand in hand with sensible plans for land use. The Federal Government has estimated that more than one in every seven acres of good crop land in California has been taken over for non-agricultural use.

Granted that today, the government holds large inventories of so-called agricultural surpluses, this may not always be the case as the growth of population presses on.

We must plan, too, for an adequate supply of good, clean water. Once a special problem of the arid regions of America, water is now a national problem. Here, too, the Federal Government has a responsibility in cooperation with the states.

Recreation facilities are already clogged to overflowing. Over the July 4th weekend last year, I am told Yosemite Park had over 36,000 visitors.

Can this problem be solved by California alone? Your state park system covers only one-half of one percent of the land in the state -- hardly enough to satisfy the needs of the 20 million people California will have in less than twenty years.

But the Federal Government owns some 47 million acres in California -- another example of the need for Federal-state cooperation.

These are only a few of the problems all of us face. But I have faith in America's ability to solve them -- and particularly in California's capacity to meet them.

For the spirit of California is still one of enterprise, of pioneering. Your continued growth is inevitable. Your material success is assured.

But I raise this question with you: How will you grow? How will America grow?

We can build the material things. Given proper leadership, we can reach levels of adequate housing for all, enough school buildings to house all our children, maximum development of natural resource potentials. Science and technology inevitably will make greater inroads on disease and untimely death, hunger and intolerable living conditions. These will eventually be conquered through physical changes in the material conditions of life.

If we live in the grandest houses and attend the most modern schools, but still have not learned to live with each other, to respect differences of opinion, to honor intellectual attainments, we have built upon sand and not rock.

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I speak, in short, for building on the inner qualities of our people -- those qualities of mind and spirit that encourage man to live at peace and in harmony with himself and his brothers.

In this great job of human engineering, I suggest that we can learn much from the very men who will transform our physical surroundings -- the scientists themselves. You have an abundance of them in California. The distinctive habits of thought which scientists acquire in their pursuit of truth can, if adopted by all of us, lead us straight to the objective of better social relationships, of better attitudes by all of us toward our neighbors across the block or across the seas. I refer to such scientific habits of thought and approach as reason, independence, realism, imagination, and truth.

In building on the inner qualities of our people we will, of course, give emphasis to education. And we must be prepared to accept, indeed welcome, non-conformity and a questioning of

contemporary institutions as two of the fruits of the educational process. An independence of thought and spirit must accompany pure learning if education is to have true meaning.

We cannot overemphasize education in building our future. Our educational system should be so highly developed that, like our agricultural system, it produces a surplus -- a surplus of trained, skilled and professionally competent men and women for export to lands that need our help.

There is much unfinished business to take care of in this country. As we go about it, new issues will arise. The human enterprise never finally solves its problems, so long as it remains a going concern. Progress involves not merely the solution of old problems but the discovery of new ones.

But even if we solved all our domestic problems, our troubles as a nation would not be over. "The paradise of our domestic security", as a noted theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, recently said,

000710

- 17 -

would still be "suspended in a hell of global insecurity".

So, as we strive to put our own house in order, let us not forget our neighbors in other lands. Our material accomplishments must not become ends in themselves, but the means to achieve the ideals we share with peoples elsewhere. Our goal must always be to bolster the faith of peoples everywhere in free institutions and the democratic way of life.

April 16, 1959



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