

EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS BY
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

DFL CONVENTION

May 21, 1952

We have had eight years of progressive deterioration of the powerful nation that held the unquestioned leadership of the world in 1952.

The great diplomatic disaster at the summit was something that by the logic of events was bound to come sooner or later. The policies of Conservative Government, given sufficient time, have had their inevitable result. Like a tragedy, act by act, the Debacle at Paris was almost foreordained.

It was only a question of the precise time and place and circumstances which the elaborate public relations facade of the Republican administration would come crashing into ruin.

You cannot expect fair play, decency, and a helping hand from the coldly dedicated enemies of our nation. When we stumble we can expect only an onrush of the wolves. When we falter we can expect only the slash at the national jugular vein.

The fatal flaw of Conservative Government is that in its narrow preoccupation with preserving things as they are, it cannot or will not recognize the world is in great and powerful ferment, that the challenge of Soviet power is in deadly earnest, and that the slogans and shibboleths of 19th century Republicanism cannot substitute for fearless and imaginative executive leaders.

There has been no sense of direction, no will, no dedication, no purpose for eight years.

Coming in second-best has become a habit.

Reacting, instead of initiating, has become the natural order of things for our government.

There has been for eight years no consistent coordination of foreign policy with the planning of our Armed Forces, no effort to weld together a total national policy to deal with the enormous threat to world peace.

For eight years the main work of the idea men in the Republican Party has been to cover up, to explain away, to gloss over the incompetence and mismanagement, the confusion and hesitation of the administration.

Public relations has become a way of life. It has created the great illusion that all was well in our domestic and international affairs. It has blurred the truth. It has substituted popularity for leadership, mediocrity for principle.

American prestige and leadership that once stood unchallenged, has fallen so low in eight years that the President of the United States can be publicly and brutally humiliated.

I do not wish to imply that the world is come to an end, that we should be wringing our hands and heading for the bomb shelters because of the Debacle at Paris.

Rather this should be a time of calm and dispassionate assessment. There must be time to let the dust settle, to permit a cooling-off period. We must not permit ourselves to be panicked or stampeded.

Above all, we must realize that there is no single stroke that can once again restore the American position. This climactic event at Paris has occurred for many and complex reasons.

Only by a completely fresh approach to the task of national leadership, only by a liberal government prepared to do what is necessary for American survival can we expect to begin the repair of the disaster.

I have been critical of the manner in which the prestige of our nation was laid on the block in recent weeks of the incredible series of actions and statements that gave the Soviet dictator the weapon he needed to attack our position and to wreck the summit meeting.

I have requested that the appropriate committees of the Congress receive a full and detailed report from the executive branch -- not only covering American actions, but also summarizing the events that appear to have occurred within the Soviet world which may account for the particular virulence and brutality of the Soviet dictator's reaction to the U-2 incident.

While the President must be commended for the dignity and composure with which he met the bluster and arrogance of Mr. Khrushchev, it is not the part of American patriotism to pretend that all is well. It is no service to the future security of our country to ignore the facts, to pretend that nothing very serious has happened.

There are matters of great urgency. There must be immediate preparation and planning for what could be even a greater crisis on Berlin. There must be immediate steps to restore confidence and mutual trust among the NATO allies. The lines of communication with the Soviet Government must not be broken by further mistakes.

In short, we must have a program not to repair the damage at the Summit, but to restore the whole edifice of American power and leadership.

000983

*ARO Murat, Nelson
McCarthy*

LA DIES AND GENTLEMEN, MY FRIENDS AND FELLOW MEMBERS OF
THE MINNESOTA DEMOCRATIC FARMER-LABOR PARTY --

I PLAN TO TALK WITH YOU TODAY ABOUT A MATTER WHICH IS
ON EVERYONE'S MIND, ABOUT WHICH SO MANY OF YOU HAVE ALREADY
EXPRESSED TO ME SUCH GREAT CONCERN AND ANXIETY -- THE COLLAPSE
OF THE SUMMIT NEGOTIATIONS, ~~THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT~~
and the future
~~THE LEADERSHIP OF OUR COUNTRY HAS LOST ITS GRIP ON THE~~
Course of American Foreign Policy.
~~HARD AND DANGEROUS TASK OF SURVIVAL.~~

BUT I FIRST WANT TO EXPRESS TO YOU, MY DEAR FRIENDS,
MY EVERLASTING GRATITUDE FOR THE CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT, AND
UNSPARING EFFORT WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME IN OUR EFFORTS TO
WIN CONSIDERATION ~~ME~~ AS A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE
UNITED STATES. *No man could have asked for more than was*
GIVEN TO ME IN THESE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS BY MINNESOTA. ~~What~~

~~NO FINANCIAL BASE, WITH NOT GREAT PUBLIC RELATIONS BUILDUP,~~

~~INDEED AGAINST THE HOSTILITY OF THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS, WE~~

we have
TOGETHER, CARRIED THE FLAG FORWARD TOWARD THE GOAL OF NOMINATING

000984

A DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE DEDICATED TO THE STRONG LIBERAL
TRADITIONS ^{to} WHICH ^{we} HAVE HELD FAST ~~TO~~ HERE IN MINNESOTA.

I HAVE NO REGRETS. THAT WE WERE UNABLE TO PREVAIL COMPLETELY
IS FAR LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE FACT THAT AFTER MANY MONTHS OF
HARD, VIGOROUS CAMPAINGING--ON THE ISSUES -- THE DEMOCRATIC
PARTY NATIONALLY, AND THE MAJOR DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES REMAINING
UNDER CONSIDERATION, HAVE CLEARLY MOVED TOWARD THE LIBERAL
SIDE.

I HOPE THAT YOU FEEL THAT I ^{HAVE} /^{THE} REPRESENTED ~~THIS~~ CLEAN,
IDEALISTIC MINNESOTA TRADITION OF POLITICS, AND THAT THE
POLICIES FOR WHICH WE HAVE FOUGHT HERE IN MINNEOSTA FOR SO
MANY YEARS HAVE LARGELY BECOME THE POLICIES WHICH ANY
DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE CHOSEN NEXT JULY WILL FOLLOW.

AND I PLEDGE TO YOU ONCE AGAIN THAT ALL MY ENERGIES SHALL
BE CONCENTRATED AT THE CONVENTION IN JULY ON ENSURING THAT
THE ISSUES AS WE SEE THEM IN MINNESOTA AND THE UPPER MIDWEST
WILL BE THE MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS AT LOS ANGELES, IN THE
NOVEMBER ELECTIONS, AND IN THE POLICIES OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC

000985
~~PRESIDENT WHO WILL CERTAINLY ENTER THE WHITE HOUSE IN 1961!~~

AND LET THERE BE NO DOUBT ABOUT IT -- WE ARE GOING TO
in November
ELECT A DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT -- JUST AS WE ARE GOING TO ELECT
THE FULL DEMOCRATIC-FARMER-LABOR TICKET HERE IN MINNESOTA!

L YOU ARE GOING TO SEE HUBERT HUMPHREY IN EVERY ONE OF
OUR ~~DXXXXXX~~ COUNTIES THIS SUMMER AND FALL. I CAN TELL YOU
RIGHT NOW THAT WE ARE GOING TO PUT ON THE KIND OF CAMPAIGN --

WITH YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT -- THAT WILL ~~SET THE REPUBLICAN~~
bring a
Great Victory for liberal progressive
~~PARTY BACK IN MINNESOTA FOR TWENTY YEARS~~
democracy.

THEY HAVE THE MONEY. THEY HAVE THE PRESS.

WE HAVE THE ISSUES, WE HAVE THE CANDIDATES, AND WE HAVE
THE PEOPLE!

~~WOULD YOU SWAY...~~

L I SAID THAT WE HAVE THE ISSUES. WE DO. AND WE ARE GOING
TO RUN ON WHOSE ISSUES -- A HARD, CLEAN, TOUGH CAMPAIGN. WE ARE
GOING ON THE ATTACK. WE ARE GOING TO LAY BARE THE REPUBLICAN
RECORD, WE ARE GOING TO BREAK THROUGH ALL THE MADISON-AVENUE

000986

GIMMICKS AND HOOPLA WITH WHICH THE REPUBLICANS WILL TRY TO
DISTRACT THE PEOPLE, AND WE ARE GOING TO PRESENT TO THE VOTERS
CLEAR, CONSTRUCTIVE, SENSIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE

REPUBLICAN POLICIES WHICH HAVE BROUGHT OUR NATION NOTHING

OF NEGLECT, WASTE, AND indecision ~~THESE POLICIES HAVE BROUGHT~~

WE HAVE HAD EIGHT YEARS -- EIGHT LONG YEARS -- OF

"DYNAMIC CONSERVATISM", AS THE REPUBLICAN PRESS AGENTS LOVE

TO CALL IT. - Dynamic Apathy

WE HAVE HAD EIGHT YEARS OF PROGRESSIVE DETERIORATION

OF THE POWERFUL NATION THAT HELD THE UNQUESTIONED LEADERSHIP

OF THE WORLD IN 1952.

THE GREAT DIPLOMATIC DISASTER AT THE SUMMIT ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ WAS SOMETHING THAT BY THE SHEER LOGIC OF

EVENTS WAS BOUND TO COME SOONER OR LATER. THE POLICIES OF

CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT, GIVEN SUFFICIENT TIME, HAVE HAD THEIR

INEVITABLE Result. LIKE A GREEK TRAGEDY, ACT BY ACT, THE

DEBACLE AT PARIS ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ WAS ALMOST FOREORDAINED. ~~XXXXXXXX~~

000987

IT WAS ONLY A QUESTION OF THE PRECISE TIME AND PLACE AND CIRCUMSTANCES AT WHICH THE ELABORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS FAÇADE OF THE REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION WOULD COME CRASHING INTO RUIN.

YOU CANNOT EXPECT ~~OF~~ ^{fair play} DECENCY, AND A HELPING HAND FROM THE COLDLY DEDICATED ENEMIES OF OUR NATION. WHEN WE STUMBLE, WE CAN EXPECT ONLY AN ONRUSH OF THE WOLVES. WHEN WE FALTER WE CAN EXPECT ONLY THE SLASH AT THE ^{national} JUGULAR VEIN.

THE TASK OF ^{leading} ~~PRESERVING~~ THE FREE WORLD IS ^{a full-time} ~~NO CHILD'S GAME~~. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO STUMBLE. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO FALTER/.

YET THE POLICIES OF THIS GOVERNMENT OVER THE PAST EIGHT YEARS HAVE SO ~~SIPPED~~ OUR STRENGTH, WASTED OUR RESBURCES, AND DISCOURAGED AMERICANS OF ABILITY AND IMAGINATION FROM PARTICIPATING IN GOVERNMENT, THAT WE ^{ARE} STUMBLING AND FALLING REGULARLY.

THE FATAL FLAW OF CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT IS THAT IN ITS NARROW PREOCCUPATION WITH PRESERVING THINGS AS THEY ARE, IT CANNOT OR WILL NOT RECOGNIZE THAT THE WORLD IS IN GREAT AND POWERFUL FERMENT, THAT THE CHALLENGE OF ~~THE~~ SOVIET ^{Power} IS IN DEADLY EARNEST, AND THAT THE SLOGANS AND SHIBBOLETHS OF

000988

19TH CENTURY REPUBLICANISM CANNOT SUBSTITUTE FOR FEARLESS AND
IMAGINATIVE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP.

IT IS ONLY BECAUSE THE WRECKAGE OF AMERICAN PRESTIGE AND
AND DRAMATICALLY
LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN SO NAKEDLY/LAID BARE ~~IN~~ THAT THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE NOW BEGINNING TO LOOK ABOUT THEM ~~THEM~~ WITH
OPENED EYES.

ALL ABOUT US, BENEATH THE SURFACE FACADE OF PROSPEROUS
AND
TIMES, HEAVY CONSUMER GOODS PRODUCTION, /STOCK MARKET PROFITS,
~~AND~~ WE CAN SEE THE BITTER FRUIT OF EIGHT YEARS OF INDIFFERENCE,
LAZINESS, NEGLECT AND WASTE.

THE AMERICAN POSITION IN THE WORLD, AFTER ALL, IS ONLY ~~X~~
~~RENDICTCSEXXCEREKCKTENXOCX~~ A SUMMATION OF ALL THE MAJOR
DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICIES OF THE NATION. HOW COULD WE EXPECT
TO HOLD THE LEADERSHIP OF THE WORLD WHEN WE HAVE SO NEGLECTED THE
PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN ^{Economy} AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, SCIENCE, NATURAL
RESOURCES? HOW COULD WE EXPECT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY WHEN WE
HAVE UNILATERALLY ^{weakened our position} ~~BEHIND~~ AT THE DICTATE OF THE SECRETARY OF

THE TREASURY AND THE BUREAU OF THE BUDGET?

How could we expect to meet the challenge of the Soviet Union among the new nations of the world when the deliberate fiscal policies of the government have held our own economic expansion to a crawl?

How could a political party bemused with the idea that the President should be a weak executive, and that planning and programming is somehow evil, expect to preserve American security ~~and defend American~~

There has been no sense of direction, no will, no dedication, no purpose -- for eight years.

Coming in second-best has become a habit.

Reacting, instead of initiating, has become the natural order of things for our government. *This must stop!*

There has been for eight years no ~~co~~ *consistent* coordination of foreign policy with the planning of our armed forces, no effort to weld together a total national policy to deal with the enormous threat to world peace.

000990

FOR EIGHT YEARS THE ~~CRISIS~~ ^{main work} OF THE IDEA MEN IN THE

REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS BEEN TO COVER UP, TO EXPLAIN AWAY, TO

GLOSS OVER THE INCOMPETENCE AND MISMANAGEMENT ^{the confusion} ~~OF THE WHITE~~
~~HOUSE.~~ and hesitation of the Administration. PUBLIC RELATIONS HAS BECOME A WAY OF LIFE. IT HAS

CREATED THE GREAT ILLUSION THAT ALL WAS WELL IN OUR DOMESTIC

AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. ~~IT HAS BLURRED THE TRUTH~~ ^{It has blurred the truth}
~~BUT NOT HAS SET IN.~~ ~~THE TERMITES~~

~~HAVE BEEN AT WORK.~~ ^{It has substituted Popularity for Leadership}
^{mediocrity for Principle}

~~IN 1930, THE AMERICAN POSITION OF SUPREMACY AND LEADERSHIP~~

~~HAS BEEN REPLACED BY~~ ^{American Prestige and leadership once} ~~THAT STOOD UNCHALLENGED~~
~~HAS BEEN SLIGHTLY~~ ^{has fallen slowly in} ~~IN ITS SUPREMACY AND LEADERSHIP~~ ~~IN EIGHT YEARS~~

THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES CAN BE PUBLICLY

AND BRUTALLY HUMILIATED.

I DO NOT WISH TO IMPLY THAT THE WORLD IS COMING TO AN
END, THAT WE SHOULD BE WRINGING OUR HANDS AND HEADING FOR THE
BOMB SHELTERS BECAUSE OF THE DEBACLE AT PARIS.

RATHER THIS SHOULD BE A TIME OF CALM AND DISPASSIONATE
ASSESSMENT. THERE MUST BE TIME TO LET THE DUST SETTLE, TO
PERMIT A COOLING-OFF PERIOD. WE MUST NOT PERMIT OURSELVES TO

000991

BE PANICKED OR STAMPEDED.

ABOVE ALL, WE MUST REALIZE THAT THERE IS NO SINGLE STROKE THAT CAN ONCE AGAIN RESTORE THE AMERICAN POSITION. THIS CLIMACTIC EVENT AT PARIS HAS OCCURED FOR MANY AND COMPLEX REASONS ~~TO WIT: THE ACCUMULATION OF EIGHT YEARS OF INADEQUATE AND INCOMPETENT LEADERSHIP AND INCOMPETENCE.~~

ONLY BY A COMPLETELY FRESH APPROACH TO THE TASK OF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, ONLY BY ~~RENEWING~~ A LIBERAL GOVERNMENT PREPARED TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR AMERICAN SURVIVAL CAN ~~WE~~ WE EXPECT TO BEGIN THE REPAIR OF THE DISASTER.

I HAVE BEEN ~~SEVERELY~~ CRITICAL OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE PRESTIGE OF OUR NATION WAS LAID ON THE BLOCK IN RECENT WEEKS, OF THE INCREDIBLE SERIES OF ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS THAT GAVE ^{He} ~~THE~~ SOVIET DICTATOR THE WEAPON HE NEEDED TO ^{Attack} ~~DESTROY~~ OUR POSITION AND TO WRECK THE SUMMIT MEETING.

I HAVE REQUESTED THAT THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS RECEIVE A FULL AND DETAILED REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

000992

~~XXXX~~

BRANCH -- NOT ONLY COVERING AMERICAN ACTIONS, BUT ALSO
SUMMARIZING THE EVENTS THAT ~~APP~~EAR TO HAVE OCCURRED WITHIN
THE SOVIET WORLD WHICH MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE PARTICULAR
VIRULENCE AND BRUTALITY OF THE SOVIET DICTATOR'S REACTION TO
THE U-2 INCIDENT.

WHILE THE PRESIDENT MUST BE COMMENDED FOR THE DIGNITY AND
COMPOSURE WITH WHICH HE MET THE BLUSTER AND ARROGANCE OF MR.
KHRUSHCHEV, IT IS NOT THE PART OF AMERICAN PATRIOTISM TO
all is well.
PRETEND THAT ~~NOTHING HAS HAPPENED~~. IT IS NO SERVICE TO THE
FUTURE SECURITY OF OUR COUNTRY TO IGNORE THE FACTS, TO PRETEND
THAT NOTHING VERY SERIOUS HAS HAPPENED.

THERE ARE MATTERS OF GREAT URGENCY, ~~TO UNDERTAKE~~. THERE
MUST BE IMMEDIATE PREPARATION AND PLANNING FOR WHAT COULD BE
EVEN A GREATER CRISIS ON BERLIN. THERE MUST BE IMMEDIATE
STEPS TO RESTORE ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ CONFIDENCE AND MUTUAL TRUST AMONG THE
NATO ALLIES. THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE SOVIET

000993

GOVERNMENT MUST NOT BE BROKEN BY ~~TOGETHER~~ ANY FURTHER

MISTAKES.

THE GREAT TASK OF FINDING SOME WAY TO BREAK OUT OF THE
IMPASSE OF THIS TERRIBLE ARMS RACE, THROUGH A WORKABLE SYSTEM
OF INSPECTION AND CONTROLS, MUST CONTINUE ~~AT ALL COSTS.~~

INDEED, IT IS EVEN MORE CRITICALLY URGENT THAT OUR GOVERNMENT
ARE
INVEST WHAT FUNDS AND TIME AND ENERGY ~~IS~~ REQUIRED TO TAKE US
OFF DEAD CENTER ON THE DISARMAMENT PROBLEM.

UNTIL ~~XXXXX~~ THERE CAN BE AGREEMENT SECURED ON A WORKABLE
ARMS CONTROL PROGRAM, WE CONTINUE TO FACE THE URGENT TASK OF
RESTORING OUR CAPACITY TO DEAL WITH ANY SOVIET MILITARY THREAT.
WE CANNOT EXPECT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOVIET UNION OR COMMUNIST
CHINA EXPECT FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH.

IN SHORT, WE MUST HAVE A PROGRAM NOT TO REPAIR THE
DAMAGE AT THE SUMMIT, BUT TO RESTORE THE WHOLE ~~XXXXX~~ EDIFICE OF
AMERICAN ~~XXXXX~~ POWER AND LEADERSHIP.



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