

From the Office of:

SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

1313 New Senate Office Building

Washington 25, D. C.

Capitol 4-3121, Ext. 2424

FOR RELEASE: SATURDAY A. M.

MARCH 10, 1962

HUMPHREY LABELS RIGHTIST LEADERS

"KNIGHTS OF NEGATIVISM"

PITTSBURGH, PA., March 9 -- Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) tonight dubbed the leaders of the ultra-right wing as "silver-plated Knights of Noisy Negativism."

The Senate Majority Whip challenged right-wing leaders to present "some positive, constructive proposals for a change."

Humphrey addressed a Roosevelt Day dinner of the Pittsburgh Americans for Democratic Action.

"Though the armor of the Knights of Negativism shines brightly," he said, "I suspect it is like one of those old suits of armor seen in museums or found in attics: Quite rusty at the joints from lack of movement.

"And I have an even stronger suspicion that if we lifted the face hood of that suit of armor and pointed a flashlight through the dust, we would find inside exactly nothing -- except perhaps a few mouldy echoes from the past."

"The Rightist Knights of Negativism are against everything," Humphrey said. "They seek to destroy programs now proven and successful. They seek to tear down, to destroy, to negate.

"And they suggest nothing positive or constructive to replace all they would obliterate with their slogans and 19th Century cliches."

Humphrey said that the "spears of the Knights of Negativism have been blunted by the solid wall of achievement of liberal programs and progressive policies."

He scoffed at "rightist boasts that a conservative tide is dominating the country," and added:

"Noisy rallies and frequent headlines do not truly reflect the mood of the American people.

"One clue to that mood is the record of the New Frontier

M O R E

Administration in Congress. The First Session of the 87th Congress passed more solid, liberal legislation than any session since the 1930's."

"This is a liberal era for America," Humphrey concluded. "If anyone wants to see a Conservative tide, he will have to lean low. For it will be little more than a trickle of tears from the Knights of Negativism who will witness continuing, positive achievements and progress in the United States."

"silver-plated Knights of Noisy Negativism."

Humphrey addressed a Roosevelt Day dinner of the Pittsburgh Americans for Democratic Action.

"Through the armor of the Knights of Negativism shines brightly," he said, "I suspect it is like one of those old suits of armor seen in museums or found in attics: Quite rusty at the joints from lack of movement."

"And I have an even stronger suspicion that if we lifted the face hood of that suit of armor and pointed a flashlight through the dust, we would find inside exactly nothing -- except perhaps a few mouldy echoes from the past."

"The Rightist Knights of Negativism are against everything," Humphrey said. "They seek to destroy programs now proven and successful. They seek to tear down, to destroy, to negate."

"And they suggest nothing positive or constructive to replace all they would obliterate with their slogans and 19th Century cliches."

Humphrey said that the "spears of the Knights of Negativism have been blunted by the solid wall of achievement of liberal programs and progressive policies."

He scoffed at "rightist boasts that a conservative tide is dominating the country," and added:

"Noisy rallies and frequent headlines do not truly reflect the mood of the American people."

"One clue to that mood is the record of the New Frontier

Goldwater
Nixon
Rockefeller
Romney
intoc Run ^{em} all

unemployment

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
ROOSEVELT DAY DINNER
AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

Pittsburgh, Pa.
March 9, 1962

- ✓
- ✓ CIVIL RIGHTS
- ✓ Aid to Dependent of unemployed
- ✓ Unemploy camp
- ✓ Medical Bureau
- ✓ U.C.

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
ROOSEVELT DAY DINNER
AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

Pittsburgh, Pa.
March 9, 1962

Joe Clark
Dick Dilworth

I am honored to be with you tonight.

I am proud of the record of Americans
for Democratic Action, and of my
association with this organization.

And let me add that I am not afraid
that this big, surging wave of conservatism
we read so much about will crush me if I
express my respect for the ADA publicly.

Just yesterday, in Washington, a
reporter for the Associated Press called

my office to explain that he was writing a story on ADA and wanted a quote from Humphrey.

I suspect that the ~~ADA~~ reporter expected a timid, fence-straddling statement from the Assistant Majority Leader of the United States Senate. He did not get it. This is what I told him:

"The Americans for Democratic Action has a constructive influence on the general community and on the government. Its principle role is political education. It performs that function conscientiously, *effectively,* and responsibly. The mission of the ADA is to promote progressive democracy, and

at the same time to expose the political
hypocrisy of the radical left ^{Communist} and ^{Radical} Right

ADA in
The front line
of the battle
for a Free,
Just, a
Prosperous,
and Peaceful
World

I hope every news media in the Nation
uses that A.P. story, and my quote with it.

This has been a busy week for me. On

Wednesday night, I was in New York to

conservation
restoration

deliver two addresses. I sort of hoped

that a third meeting in New York -- of the

Young Americans for Freedom -- would find

a spot for me to speak between Senator

Goldwater and Senator Tower of Texas.

But they didn't invite me. I suppose
there was not enough time on the program.

This could, perhaps, be explained by two

paragraphs in a New York Times report on
their meeting the next day. I quote from
the ^{N.Y.} Times' story:

"The Young Americans had organized a
meticulous timetable. This allowed, among
other things, for a three minute 'demonstration'
for Senator Tower and a ten minute 'demonstration'
for Senator Goldwater on their introductions.

"A 'second demonstration' for Senator
Goldwater after his speech was scheduled

for four minutes. ⁴ ~~A spokesman said the~~ *what freedom!*
~~scheduling aimed to fit into the radio time~~ *what spontaneous*
~~and was based on past experience."~~ *Response - Shades of Moscow*
H. John Birch

I have just one comment: I would rather

receive two-seconds of applause from a
natural and uncontrolled ADA audience than
two hours of a planned "demonstration" from
a Rally of the Right.

¹ ~~I think~~ ¹ it is ¹ ~~obvious~~ ¹ by now that the
¹ ~~leaders~~ ¹ of the ¹ ~~radical right~~ ¹ present

themselves as knights in shining armor, *emotionally,*
eager to save the American people from the
dragons of progress and liberal achievement.

I am willing to admit that they are
knights. ~~I dub them:~~ Knights of Noisy
Negativism.

*Nights -
Dark*

And they are, indeed, suited in
shining armor. Their armor shines ~~because~~

"Gold watered" - John Birchard

it is silver-plated and well-heeled. It
is polished to a high gloss with liberal
doses of oil from Texas and Southern
California.

Though the armor of the Knights of
Negativism shines brightly, I suspect it
is like one of those old suits of armor
seen in museums or found in attics: ^{ll} Quite
rusty at the joints from lack of movement. ^{ll}

And I have an even stronger suspicion
that if ^{we} ~~one of us~~ lifted the face hood of
that armor and ~~pointed a flashlight through~~ *took a good look*
~~the dust~~, we would find inside exactly,
nothing -- except perhaps a few mouldy

↳ Spooks of Suspicion
↳ Friends of Fear

- 7 -

echoes from the past. —

↳ The Rightist Knights of Negativism
carry heavy spears for their attacks.

↳ They are against everything. They seek
to destroy programs now proven and

successful. They seek to tear down, to
destroy, to negate. ~~And they suggest~~

nothing positive or constructive ~~to~~

they chant
~~replace all they would obliterate with~~

their slogans and 19th Century cliches.

Victims of
frustration
and
defeat.

But if you look closely, you will

notice that the spears of the ~~real~~

right wingers are blunt, ^{and worn.} Indeed, they

are worn almost to the handle. They have

been blunted and worn down by ^{charging at} the solid

wall of ~~achievement~~ of liberal programs

and progressive policies. #

and those ~~The Rightist~~ Knights of Negativism

speaking jubilantly about a "conservative

tide of the future." They gleefully

*Backwash
and Sludge
of the Past.*

boast that a majority of Americans are

turning away from liberal ^{+Progressive} traditions and

policies. They claim that conservatism

is becoming the dominant factor in

American thought and policy.

L Nonsense. ~~It's the backwash~~

I disagree, and not because I am a
[Signature]
dedicated liberal.

L It is true that conservative groups
are making noise and
getting headlines - but
noise & headlines do not reflect
the mood of the Country

and right-wing organizations have been making more noise in recent months. It is true that they have captured more news headlines during the past year.

Difference as Caroline
77% Kennedy
26% Democ

But noise and headlines do not truly reflect the mood of the country.

Kennedy a better measure of the mood.

and another guide to that mood is the action of Congress, and the Executive Branch administration and the first Session of the 87th Congress last year is

enough to negate all the boasts about a "conservative tide."

A Nation of Confidence

The liberal policies and programs of Pres. Kennedy and the New Frontier were given solid backing in the public and in Congress -- sometimes by overwhelming majorities.

majorities.

The Congress approved the Area
Redevelopment Act, to help economically
distressed areas of the country back to
health. — Approved Unemploy Compens
aid to Depend. Children of unemploy

We boosted the minimum wage standard
to \$1.25 an hour and extended coverage
under this law to an additional 3.6
million workers. — Food Stamps —

We approved the Housing Act to give
the country the most progressive and
sweeping housing program in its history.

We added a new, liberal dimension to
our foreign aid program with the "Alliance

Recession
to
Growing
Prosperity

Double
Food for Peace
Program
\$1 Billion
up

Civil
Rights
Justice

(Good Neighbor
FDR)

for Progress" in Latin America to

encourage economic, social and political
reform. — Reorganized For Aid —

And we launched two liberal programs
for which I had worked for years: The
United States Peace Corps, and the United
States Arms Control and Disarmament
Agency. — ~~Reorganized Foreign Aid~~

Joe Clark

All of these are facts, not boasts.

They are achievements, not claims. They
are practical steps forward, not pleas to
move backward.

and The job is not finished. The First
Session of the 87th Congress produced more

substantial, liberal legislation than in
any year since the early thirties, but
much remains to be done.

and, Much will be done in this Second

Session of the 87th Congress.

But, Liberals in the Senate and the House
of Representatives do not fool themselves

about the efforts needed for a record of
achievement. We are well aware of the

strength of conservative forces in Congress.

We know that we face some hard fights and

~~some~~ long battles to enact the programs

we believe are necessary to keep the Nation

moving forward.

*Liko
- Bill Morehead
- Joe Clark*

But we are confident, ~~The number of~~
~~liberals in the Congress has increased~~
~~substantially in recent years. And they~~
~~have learned to work together -- and to~~
~~work more effectively -- for the policies~~
~~and programs in which they believe.~~

~~With the leadership and support of~~
~~President Kennedy, we have embarked on a~~
~~new decade of progress and achievement.~~

~~I have no doubt that the record of success~~
~~in the First Session of the 87th Congress~~
~~will be continued this year.~~

of what I mean by progress -

Let me use as an example the program
of medical care for elderly citizens under

the Social Security system.)

*my first bill
in the 81st Congress*

A tremendous propaganda offensive has been conducted against it. Vast sums of money have been spent in an effort to convince the public that the Administration's medical care plan is a form of "socialized medicine."

The facts tell another story.

It is a fact that millions of elderly Americans today face frequent health problems -- at a time when their incomes are reduced.

It is a fact that millions of elderly Americans cannot afford the high premiums

of private medical care plans, and that the private plans at best provide limited coverage.

It is a fact that the program advanced by the Administration and liberal Congressional leaders includes a guarantee and emphasis that patients under the program would have free choice of doctor and hospital.

It is a fact that the medical care program under Social Security would be soundly-financed.

Under the Administration program, a citizen would pay into a fund for medical insurance over a lifetime of earnings --

instead of facing staggering hospital and medical costs at an advanced age when he is least able to pay. ~~at~~

This liberal program would be an example of "government with a heart" -- it is morally sound and it would be fiscally sound.

It would not require any form of a humiliating "means test" or declaration of need.

We face a stiff fight to ^{pass} ~~establish~~ this program, but I predict it will be approved. The American people -- young and old -- want it. The President has given it high priority. And the liberal

leaders of Congress will push hard for its enactment.

Medical Care for the Elderly under the Social Security system is just one of many goals of the liberal New Frontier.

Higher Edu
Job Retraining
Clark Bell

They will be reached soon -- no matter how many rallies the Knights of Negativism organize and no matter how much noise the Radical Rightists make.

Unemployment
Key Issue
Issue
U.N. - Bonds
Attack on
U.N.

U.N. Bonds

This is a liberal year, a liberal decade, a liberal era for America. If

anyone wants to see the Conservative tide, he will have to lean low. For it will be

little more than a trickle of tears from

~~the~~ the Knights of Negativism who see
continuing, positive achievements in the
United States.

The liberal of today does see one
tide -- the tide of change. It is sweeping
the world. The liberal knows that the
millions of people who have suffered
hunger, poverty and social injustice all
of their lives are not willing to wait
for promises of gradual change. He knows
that unless the United States attempts to
help and guide this revolution for change,
we could be crushed by it.

That is why our Nation must do

everything possible to encourage social
and political reform, in the struggling
nations and areas of the world. We must
help the growth of the ^{Free} trade union movement,
the development of cooperatives and
progressive policies by business and
government leaders of every nation.

Conservative policies will not work
in an era of rapid change and demands for
progress by the people. Human beings who
suffer poverty, injustice, illiteracy and
hunger are no longer patient to "conserve"
the old conditions of the past.

Above all, we need to develop effective

plans for both domestic and international programs. Liberals believe in planning.

They are impatient with those who say that planning is "good practice" for business" but "socialism" in government.

L Liberals in the Congress, in the Democratic Party,

in our communities, in organizations such as ADA

must work together for their common goal --

a Nation and world of continuing progress,

of justice for all men, of secure peace

and freedom.

(END)

Over



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