

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY  
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
NATIONAL SHOE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION, CHICAGO, ILL.  
OCTOBER 14, 1963

It certainly is a pleasure to attend the Shoe Fair here in Chicago and to have this breakfast opportunity to talk with you who represent the National Shoe Manufacturers Association. I am especially happy to have a part in helping you launch both the keynote theme of the Shoe Fair, as well as a national campaign for physical fitness and better health. Your slogan is "Take Steps to Prolong Your Life---Walk."

I am both dubious and hopeful about my part in this. I am dubious because I haven't been able to get down to a walk in years. The other morning at breakfast my wife asked me where she might get some

ladies track shoes. "My dear," I replied, "aren't you taking the exercise bit a little far". "Exercise is not the point" she responded, "there are some times when I want to catch you."

I am hopeful however that my being here will be a good omen. My wife is on your side. So is my staff.

This Democratic Administration is for you 100 per cent. Only 99 maybe, if we have to count Pierre Salinger, although I think the Attorney General ought to be counted twice. As usual the Attorney General comes to the brink of overdoing things. A fifty-mile hike is a bit much. I understand he got confused between illustrating physical fitness and stimulating statistics for Medicare!

His heart was in the right place however. Stewart Udall by the way, has probably walked more miles of trails in the National Parks than all the previous Secretaries of the Interior put together. Not to mention the

mountains he has scaled in Asia and Africa. If he is equalled on the Hill, it can only be by his brother, Morris, Congressman from Arizona.

Everywhere the New Frontier is setting a pace. We must acknowledge however a tradition. Remember Harry Truman? He was out walking every morning when most people wouldn't dream of getting up. He still is. Don't forget this either---everytime he walked, six pairs of secret service men's shoes were getting ground up!

The only time we flawed was in 1952. That picture of Adlai Stevenson in a barber chair with a hole in his shoe was a mistake. It proved he was walking, but it should, of course, have been taken in a shoe store in the act of buying a new pair of shoes. To have Adlai Stevenson getting a hair cut, showing a



hole in his shoe, looked like an example of conspicuous consumption on the wrong end!

Where shoes are concerned, we Democrats have the Motto "spend the leather." When notified, the Republicans will no doubt accuse us on this. At least the Far Right will. No doubt they will advocate a measure to cut off all left feet. You had better watch out for that.

The President just signed into law a bill for expanding medical education. Podiatrists---a fancy name for foot doctors---have a share in this I suppose, but we didn't have much about them in the hearings. That is a tribute to you. Believe me, the way we walk, if our feet hurt, we would know about foot doctors and you would hear from us! So by taking care of things underfoot, you have been taking care of things overhead.

We do not run the Supreme Court, but they should not be left out. Justice Douglas was doing hiking miles before Bobby Kennedy could walk. He has kept it up too, with what does not appear to be any loss of vitality! And here's one I'll bet you didn't know! For years Justice Frankfurter---retired now, of course,---walked daily from Georgetown to his office in the Supreme Court building on the Hill. If you know Washington and are a good shoe man, you will pause for a moment of respect.

Yes indeed---in Washington you have friends!

Now, seriously---I know you do not mind getting a little side benefit out of a campaign---you do have a serious purpose and I applaud it. So does the President of the United States. The fitness of America, mentally, morally, and physically, is close to his heart.

He appreciates very much your support of his program/

I know you appreciate his support of yours.

It is not that we are a soft and flabby people.

Some of us eat too much and some of us drink too much.

Most of us however are just too darned busy. We work hard---sitting at a desk. We travel countless miles---in a car, train, or plane, I mean we work, but still we are sitting somewhere while doing it.

The tone can go out of a man's muscles in a life like that, and with it, that extra element of alertness his work needs. It becomes easier to take a tranquilizer when a walk in the woods or a park would do his mind and soul more good. He reaches for an aspirin when some fresh air in a turn around the block would serve him better. I am a pharmacist by trade and I am not disloyal to the drug industry. We



know however what nine out of ten doctors would really recommend, and we are with them.

The doctors are telling us moreover, that the heart is a muscle. You can strain it like any other, and if so there is damage. Too much exertion is not good. Neither is not enough. Worst of all---and this is a temptation most of us are prey to after 35---is to have a spurt of hard physical exertion after a long fallow period of inactivity. This does us in.

A moderate, steady, daily exertion is the good old Golden Mean. This is best for us. Walking is the easiest, least expensive, most rewarding way to do it. There isn't a one of us who would not be 50 to 100 percent better off physically, and I would add mentally and spiritually too, for such a program.

I urge you to put your campaign over, not only in your industry, but to the nation. Get America walking.

If I sincerely want us to walk, I want us to talk too, I may be a pharmacist, but I am also a Senator. Let me take a few minutes then to engage you on what you can do for the country now that you are assured of what the country is doing for you.

You represent an industry. More broadly you represent the business community, the working field of economic life. There is not any human activity not affected by economics. There is no human activity that does not affect it.

I am concerned mostly with the area of government. I want us to talk, have conversation---hold a continuous "dialogue" to use today's "in" word--on the relationship between government and the business community.

Of course you businessmen bring particular concerns that relate to specific problems of your



business to the attention of those of us in Congress.

This is good, right, and proper. Incidentally, I commend you people in particular for doing a good job on this.

There are larger issues of mutual concern on which we do not talk enough. This is not in the best interests of either of us, nor of the country.

I was surprised to hear Governor Romney last Spring in Washington, D. C., say that the Republican Party ought to erase its image of being tied to Big Business. I thought that might have been ungracious to the campaign contributors. We like our Democratic businessmen and are not unwilling to get some more. I do agree however, that for Republican or Democrat, a relationship of possessiveness with business, for either side, does neither of us any good. Politics and business are separate although they must work to-

gether on the country's welfare.

I want to throw out two problems for mutual discussion, the education of each other and of the public:

1. The Nature of Government and private responsibility.
2. The Nature of the role of the Federal budget.

Let me say a word about the first---the nature of government and private responsibility in keeping prosperity up and the economy moving.

This is a private enterprise economy. 80 percent of economic activity in the U. S. is in the private sector. Of the remaining 20 percent, all but a ridiculously small percent in the public sector is for the defense of America and the Free World. It is a private economy and we are going to keep it that way!

That means, however, that the wherewithal to

keep up our defense, to keep up basic services to an expanding population, to meet high-priority necessities for such things as education at all levels, must come from a growing private economy. The future here depends mostly upon you.

Yet the government has a role. This government wants to help you. We have crossed one bridge on this. No government, of any administration can stand aside if there is any threat of economic depression. Any government will act and should. However there is another bridge before us. Not even too much of a recession can be permitted. Even prosperity isn't enough. We have prosperity today. We are enjoying the longest stretch in recent years without recession. The economy is growing. Yet still we have 5 million unemployed, a balance of payments deficit, and a shortage of means for many needed things.



The main answer is to get a higher rate of productivity, a higher rate of economic growth.

To stimulate this end the President has proposed a tax cut. This is designed to get more money into consumer demand, more money into business to make the changes necessary to employ more people. It is designed to give business the means to do research on production methods to achieve prices more competitive for greater sales in a world as well as a domestic market.

This is one major step. It is not a panacea, for other things must be done too. But it is important. I support it. Your support is needed to, but not without as we say in the Senate, your "advice and consent." I hope we'll hear a lot from you on a problem here of a joint partnership between government and business, a mutual leadership and education of our people.

That calls forth a brief word on my second invitation to talk on the role of the Federal budget.

The Federal budget is not exactly like a private householder's budget. A private individual must come out in the black all of the time, or show how he will in a very short time, when he starts to seek credit. The government must also, only it has a longer time span.

The Federal budget and the tax structure which supports it should be viewed more like a governor on the engine of the productive power of the economy.

Of course inflation is bad and must be checked. Of course a budget must be brought into balance. Of course debt must be measured prudently in terms of its promise to earn enough to redeem itself. Some deficits and debt can be incurred if they do that.

In recent years the budget deficits have been the byproduct, not the cause, of insufficient economic growth. Even so, the Federal debt since 1947 has grown much less than private debt. More importantly it has fallen steadily in relation to the economic size and strength of the country. In 1947 the Federal debt was 110 percent of the Gross National Product. Today it is only 53 percent and is steadily falling even with recent and prospective deficits.

As spending and tax structures are geared to getting the maximum development of the economy, we can and will achieve the balances everybody wants.

We are driving a 600 billion dollar economic machine. It is sensitive. We have to adjust it and adjust ourselves, particularly our mental attitudes and habits. There are problems and controversial points. Again we need the cooperation of your advice and consent, and a partnership in the education of all



our citizens in a common cause of prosperity and freedom.

I did not come here to sell you a bill of goods. This is not a dogmatic administration. If we were there would be no hope of getting the country moving again.

You want to walk. I am all for you, and I'll preach it even if I am running. I want to talk. I want you in business to join us in government in the dialogue.

END



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