

P R O C E E D I N G S

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETAIL DRUGGISTS
ANNUAL CONVENTION

ADDRESS OF THE HONORABLE HUBERT
H. HUMPHREY, VICE-PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tuesday, October 12, 1965

The Washington Hilton Hotel
Washington, D. C.

MARTIN C. JOHNSON REPORTING SERVICE, INC.

Hearings • Conventions • General Reporting

ONE PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. 10016

MUrray Hill 3-6929

REPRESENTATIVES IN PRINCIPAL CITIES

MR. SIMMONS: President Dueker, members of the N.A.R.D., ladies and gentlemen, and friends: It is a great honor and a distinct pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to present to you the Vice-President of the United States.

ADDRESS BY THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY,
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Willard. I was just noticing here on the podium, he had two sheets of laudatory remarks about me, and didn't have the courage to make it. I insist and ask unanimous consent that these laudatory remarks be made a part of the record. (Applause.)

President Dueker and officers of the N.A.R.D., and my warm and good friends of many years' standing -- and with particular reference to those dear friends from back home that have stood with me in good days and bad, sunshine and winter and rain -- I want to especially thank my good friend George Wilharm, Frank Moudrie⁴, Angus Taylor, just to mention a few that were out here to say hello to me as I came in the door of this hotel.

There is a wonderful spirit in this gathering. I have been hearing about your visit to our nation's capital. Herman Knowland, who was outside to say hello to me, an old

friend, whispered in my ear, "You are going to find a great audience in there." I said, "Well, they ought to be in good shape because I know Jerry Ford's been over here tuning them up." (Applause.)

I notice the topic of my esteemed good friend, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives -- and he is a good friend and he's a fine gentleman; he's a good American and he's a fine Representative. He has one shortcoming -- his partisan choice -- but other than that he's going strong.

I notice he spoke on the subject, "Balance in Government." And I must say that this was an appropriate topic as the balance is just perfect right now. I didn't know I'd ever get Jerry to admit it. But he's the kind of a man that makes you appreciate the wonders of American democracy, because despite the fact that we do have two political parties, I think it's fair to say that there isn't a man or a woman in this government that doesn't put his or her country first; puts the needs of our nation first. (Applause.)

And I for one want to take this opportunity to express thanks, in your presence, to the members of the Congress of this 89th Congress, of both political parties, that have made possible the greatest, the most outstanding record of legislative achievement in the history of this republic, and it

could not have been done unless there had been cooperation between the majority and the minority. So we salute both.

Well, this is the 67th annual convention. There isn't a person here that looks over 29, and I'm feeling about 36 myself at this particular hour. I came here, fortunately for you, with no prepared speech. I just decided I wanted to come over. Yesterday -- well, I should go back a little while -- Willard Simmons has been in touch with me from time to time in the past few months, hoping that I might be able to come by to the convention. He knows that this convention is very dear to my heart. I have been at N.A.R.D. conventions for so many years I'm almost a pioneer, a charter member. I started going to these conventions with my father -- I don't know how many years ago, but I know that I was so young that my mother thought I ought not to attend, and yet, she thought it might be a good idea to have a young son along with dad. Mother was a very wise woman.

So the N.A.R.D. is not just another convention. It's not just another organization. It's a part of my family, and I'm very, very proud to be a part of this family. This is a great organization of professional men and women. It's a great organization of good Americans, and I want to say that the pharmacy profession is forever indebted to the National

Association of Retail Druggists for the work that you have done at local level, state levels and federal levels, for what you've done for this profession and for the country. And I come here to thank you. (Applause.)

Well, Willard said, "Hubert, I wish you'd come on over to the convention." And I said, "I simply can't; I have a very heavy schedule; I'd made some earlier commitments." I said, "Maybe I can drop by on Sunday night or sometime maybe just for a moment. But don't book me; don't schedule me." And then, as you know, our President informed the nation here less than a week ago that he was going to the hospital for surgery. I immediately cancelled all of my outside engagements, and said I shall remain here in Washington to attend to what duties I can, to help our President where I can, and to be available to the members of the Cabinet and the Government at any time that I might be needed.

The President's progress is just remarkable. I tell you, I suppose now Texas will claim faster recovery for its people than any other state. But, he's doing amazingly well. I might add, however, that most of his doctors are from the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. This Texas-Minnesota axis is all right.

But the other day I was with the President -- in fact,

yesterday and Sunday, and I talked with him this morning -- and I said to the President and one of his assistants, that I felt a little bit downcast, a little bit unhappy. And one of the assistants said, well, why is that? Why do you feel this way? I said, well, of course, first it always worries us when our President is going through any medical care and any particular surgery. But, I said, his recovery is so good, it isn't that that's causing me any worry. What seems to be upsetting me, I said to Mr. Moyers, the Press Secretary, is the fact that as I listen to your press reviews and your press conferences, you are always making note with biographical sketches of the doctors that are here -- and they are fine and outstanding doctors -- the cardiologist, the radiologist, the anesthetists, the internal medicine man, the surgeons, you even list out all the nurses, the technicians, even the orderlies; everybody is mentioned. And I said, I think it's wonderful. But, I said, I want you to know that this is the first administration in the history of this republic that has its own built-in pharmacist, and here I am. (Applause.)

And I'm happy to say that as of yesterday this sad omission in the revelation of the medical team was corrected. And as of yesterday, the press carried proper notice that the pharmacists, the pharmacy profession, is fully represented in

the healing arts team. (Applause.)

Now, in all seriousness, I am very, very proud to be a pharmacist. Very proud that in a humble way that it's been my privilege to have been associated with this great profession and this great retail business. I'm so happy to be able to tell you today, too, in all seriousness, that your President is well on the road to a full and complete and happy recovery. (Applause.)

Well, whatever I'm about to say will be as big a surprise to you as it is to me. But I have a couple of things I want to say to you. And then I'm going to let you get onto your luncheon and your business.

I happened to pick up the New York Times on the way coming here in the back seat of my car -- the October 12th issue -- it's about the only one they've had recently. And I picked up the financial section -- I happened to notice the financial section. And it said, stock prices surge to record on 9.6 million share volume. Dow Jones average spurts by 4.33 to a historic high.

Ladies and gentlemen, a little less than two years ago that Dow Jones average was just slightly above 700. Today it's over 940. I'm not sure what those figures mean in terms of billions of dollars of increased assets, but they run into the many, many billions.

I was consulting with the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors on the telephone in my car just as I came here. I said, translate these index figures for me, if you please, into the value and the increased value of these stocks and bonds on the New York Stock Exchange, in the Dow Jones average. And rather than to give you any misinformation, because I can't be specific, let me say that they just run into the tens of billions of dollars of increased assets for our country, for our free enterprise system, for our economy.

And ladies and gentlemen, this isn't something that is just a recent happening. It isn't a little sporadic burst, a bubble so to speak. These figures that I read to you represent continuous constructive growth. Your nation in the last 56 months has had 56 consecutive months of continued economic growth and expansion -- 56. There is no period of human history that records such an economic advance. There is no country in the recorded annals of history since the firstpage of history was written, that reveals such economic continuity of progress and growth as I have just cited to you.

Our America, our free America, our capitalist America, our free enterprise America, our democracy, has a record that is of almost unbelievable proportions in terms of its economy and of its economic expansion, of its economic prosperity. You know

it and I know it.

This is not to say that there are not times that we feel a pinch; there are not moments when there is a variation or an adjustment in the market. This is not to say that everyone in America is doing beautifully. It is to say, however, that more people today in America are doing well economically, more businesses are doing well, more farmers are doing well, more workers are doing well, more professional people are doing well, than ever before in the history of this country. And they've been doing it and getting better and enjoying more prosperity over a longer period of time than ever before in our history or the history of any country.

Don't take it for granted. It isn't an accident. It isn't a miracle. It's the product of work, the product of thought, the product of cooperation, the product of our system, the product of a partnership between government and the private sector.

I could cite the figures. Later on this week I'm to go to the business council at Hot Springs, Virginia. The President asked me yesterday to keep that engagement. I'm going to talk to these top business advisors to our government; take a message to them. I would be the last person to tell you that everything is just wonderful; that there are no problems in the

foreseeable future. I cannot guarantee you that this expansion will always continue. I can only say that we've learned a lot. We have learned a great deal. We've learned much about our economy. And if we continue to do as well as we have done in these past months, these past 56 months, almost five years now, we're going to learn more and we're going to be able to have an even better record.

Profits? First of all, the Gross National Product is at an all time high. And it will, shortly, break through the 700 billion dollar figure. Not this year, but in a very short period of time. It is not fantastic to speak of a trillion dollar economy, because it is in the offing if we but tend to our business, if we but show some self-discipline, and some semblance of confidence and responsibility. Profits are higher than ever, before and after taxes.

Taxes have been reduced in the past two and a half years by over 17 billions of dollars at the Federal level. And yet with the reduction in the corporate and the income tax rates -- and thank goodness the excise tax is at long last, out (applause) -- despite these reductions, my fellow Americans, the Federal Government is receiving more revenues than ever before. And the revenues increase at the rate of approximately 7 billion dollars a year. Why? Because we are building a bigger and a better

America; because we are releasing the great dynamic forces of our enterprise system; because more people are doing more things and more people are consuming more things than ever before; and because there is a design, at least there is a philosophy, between government and business -- an agreed upon philosophy -- that if we work together in cooperation, in understanding, in respect, rather than in suspicion and animosity, that we can continue to build our country and to make it yet an even better place in which to live, an even more powerful force for justice and freedom in this world.

So I can just summarize it by telling you, quickly, the Gross National Product of your country today is half of the total production of the world. We 195 million Americans produce goods and services over 50 percent of all the goods and services produced all over the world. (Applause.)

The other 3 billion plus produce the other 50 percent.

Wages? Better than ever. Profits? Higher than ever. Dividends? Better than ever. And less price rise over a continuous period of time of the economic expansion than any other economy on the face of the earth. I want to emphasize that the whole price index in the United States has been more stable by far than any country in recorded history. There is always, of course, a concern of inflation. And anybody that has

any concern for his country must be on constant guard to see that inflation does not destroy that which we have built. We all have a stake in this -- worker, producer, banker, financier, manufacturer, professional men -- inflation is good for no one.

And that is why your government has sought to establish what we call "guidelines" in these large labor-management relationships so that the price structure and the wage structure doesn't get out of line. And I would be remiss here in my duty and privilege as Vice-President of the United States, if I didn't once again express thanks and appreciation on the part of the people of this country and the government of this country, and, indeed, of the whole free world, to labor and management in the steel crisis, when the men of the steel industry, powerful, huge industry, sat down with the leaders of the Steel Workers Union, right here in your nation's capital, without any force, without any compulsion, without any forced arbitration, just sat down in a room just one floor above where my office is in the Executive Office Building. And after several days of discussion and negotiation, the representatives of the companies and the representatives of the Union -- Mr. Cooper representing the companies, and Mr. Abel representing the Union -- walking out of that office and coming over to the President of

the United States and saying that in the spirit of free, collective bargaining, Mr. President and my fellow Americans, we have stayed within the economic guidelines and we have a settlement.

What statesmanship! What patriotism! You owe them something; I owe them something. Because had those negotiations gotten out of hand, a spiral of inflation could have taken off in this country and it would have hurt every independent businessman, every worker, every farmer, every child, every mother, in this nation. So, I salute them, and thank them.
(Applause.)

But now, quickly, friends, we're not only interested in wealth and money and power. We have incredible wealth, far beyond the imagination of anyone. We have power that is beyond almost human comprehension. And make no mistake about it: Let me reassure you here this morning. Don't you leave your nation's capital without this assurance. You are a citizen of a country that loves peace. You are a citizen of a country that seeks no conquest. You are a citizen of a country that has been more generous than any country in recorded history. You are a citizen of a country that is the most powerful nation on the face of the earth, and yet seeks not to use that power for domination, but rather to use that power for peace and

justice and decency and freedom in this world. But make no mistake about it: We have the power, the envy of the world. (Applause.)

But what we seek is a good life for ourselves and, indeed, for others. And that's why we emphasize opportunity. That's why we emphasize justice. Don't be ashamed, my fellow Americans, that this country is concerned about the needy. Don't consider it a sign of weakness or lack of moral fiber that we're concerned about little children, old people, the sick, the poor, the hungry, The prophets of the Old Testament and the Lord of the New Testament was equally concerned, or more so. What's wrong with compassion? What's wrong with humanitarianism? Nothing. It's what we are here for. We are here to serve. We are here to make possible the fulfillment of justice, of the good life, of a life meaningful, of a life of enrichment.

And that's what we mean when we talk about the Great Society. We are not going to get what we call the Great Society by the wishing for it. We are not going to get it tomorrow. But we are a nation of people that have hopes and goals and aspirations, and this is what keeps us moving. We have incentives; we have motivations. And no country and no economic system and no political system, has ever done so much for so

many in such a short period of time as this country. This is not to beat our breasts in braggadocio; it is merely to state a fact.

But we know that even though much has been done, much more needs to be done. We know that wherever there is illiteracy there is weakness and despair. We know that where sickness strikes someone down, there is heartache, dismay and maybe economic difficulty. We know that where a person is denied an opportunity to serve on the basis of merit, or where a person is denied an opportunity to serve because of his race, or his color, or his religion; we know that that hurts America. We know that that hurts the cause of human dignity. We know that that weakens us. And we know that it is a disservice. Indeed, it is a cruel blow to the individual denied.

So your country, with all of its prosperity -- and we intend to do everything in our power as individuals and as a government to maintain this economic growth, to do it in partnership, to do it in cooperation, not with coercion; to do it with confidence and not with doubt -- we also know that what is truly important is that every individual in this country has his chance, a chance to make something out of his life.

And so we are busily engaged in opening up the pathways of opportunity. I'm not at all sure that once those pathways are

cleansed of their impediments, once these false barriers are removed, once the road of opportunity is clean and clear -- I'm not sure that everyone will walk down it. I'm not sure that everyone will make the most of this opportunity. Some may squander it. But this I am sure of: Everybody is entitled to an opportunity in this country. (Applause.)

That's what we are trying to make possible. That's why we ask your help in education. No nation ever bankrupted itself educating its people. I read a story here the other day in one of our large business journals showing where the modern corporation today, before it moves into a community, seeks to find out, first, what are its educational facilities. What is the literacy standards of its people? What is the quality of education?

Education is the best investment a nation ever made, and we're going to invest in it. We're going to invest in it, and invest in it; and it will return us with dividends of almost unbelievable proportions.

We know that a healthy America is important. We know that when people are stricken down prematurely with heart disease, cancer, or stroke, which the doctors and the economists of this nation estimate to cost us over 40 billion dollars in one year in lost income, to say nothing of the pain and the

heartache and the suffering. We know that when those things go unchecked, when we can do something about them, that this is morally wrong and economically wrong. So your government has launched huge programs, with the medical profession, with you, in research, extending the great knowledge of medicine and healing to people in the far away places of this country, establishing regional centers of medical information, medical libraries, strengthening our medical schools, our schools of pharmacy, our schools of nursing, of dentistry, and others.

Is this spending? Not on your life. It's investing. It isn't spending when you help your son go through medical school or pharmacy school. It's investing. He'll earn more; he'll be better. We can show, for example, just one simple figure: That a school drop out that drops out before he finishes high school, will earn one-half the income that a high school graduate earns in a lifetime. The most costly thing in your community is the school dropout. He's a poor economic factor. Now some, of course, make tremendous progress; some are great successes. But in the days ahead when man competes with machines and automation, education is as important for that boy as good health. Education is as important for that girl as good health, as a good home. To be without an education is to be a cripple, to be disabled, and we're going to educate in this

country. And we're going to make America known not as a nation of warriors -- even though we have power -- but as a nation of healers, as a nation of educators, as a nation of builders and not destroyers. That's our hope, and that's what we ask you to help us do. (Applause.)

Finally, let me just talk a little shop with you and then I'm going to leave. We passed a bill here known as the Medicare Bill. It's the law of the land, and it had overwhelming support by the elected representatives of the people of this country. It's a good program. Now, many people had their doubts about this program. This is the way that a democracy like ours works. We go through the refiner's fire of controversy, discussion and debate, and finally, decision. The decision has been made: Medicare they call it. Medicare -- hospital and nursing home care for the elderly. An optional plan of medical and surgical services along with nursing home and hospital care for the elderly, and drugs.

I want you to know that your officers have been in close contact with the Department of Health, Education & Welfare. I want you to know that the drug aspects of this legislation is going to be carefully studied and watched insofar as its applicability is concerned as to its effectiveness, as to what it means to the patient.

And my fellow druggists, I have a suggestion for you: Why don't you learn as much as you can about this legislation. Learn what it is, not what somebody says it is. Quit calling it names and start to understand it. It is on the books and I don't think it's ever going to be repealed.

And, therefore, my suggestion to a fellow professional is: Learn about it; know about it. You have read the propaganda; now it is time to read the law, and know the law. (Applause.)

Your customers are going to ask you about it. Why should everyone have to go to the Social Security office to find out about this? Why don't you, as a retail pharmacist, know about it? Why don't you be able; why shouldn't you be able to answer the questions? Why shouldn't your drug store, your pharmacy be the information center? It ought to be the health center of every community. This is the way that we upgrade our profession. Make your pharmacy the health center, the health information center, of your community. I know of no better way to withstand predatory pricing practices than to upgrade the service and the professional competence and the professional reputation of pharmacy. That's the way to do it. (Applause.)

And you will be doing a service for your customers, for your community, for your country. And by the way, you'll know a great deal about this legislation and be able to make some

practical suggestions for its adjustment, its revisions, or its improvement. Every law goes through that stage. We'll be watching and studying Medicare in the next year to see how it works, to see its limitations -- and I'm sure it has some -- to see what it will do in terms of services, to find out whether or not we did what we should have done. And any man that claims that he had all the answers is obviously a very Freshman member of government and the Congress.

I went through that experience. I can tell you that there is a lot to be learned around this town. And I can tell you that government is a complex business, and so is the legislative process. So be knowledgeable; be informed; be constructive. Find out how this legislation fits into your operation. Make yourself the friend of the elderly. Make yourself the friend of the senior citizen. Know everything that is being done for them; join them, they need your help; be a part of them; be a friend to them. And try to help them get the kind of social economic policy in this country, public and private, that is worthy of our elderly, of our senior citizens.

That's my advice to you today. I think that if you do that, you are going to see that we can do much that will be not only helpful to the people for which the legislation is designed, but also to those who are a part of the apparatus of

making the legislation effective.

My fellow druggists, there was a time when people told you to resist, and you did resist, and you almost got left out, while others got in that were telling you to resist. I suggest now that you take a constructive and healthy look at it. Where the health legislation of your government seems in wrong, seems in error, tell us. You are respected. Mr. Simmons, your president, these are men that are respected. These are men that have entree into this administration or any other administration. They have many friends in the Congress; they are known by the President. Your Executive Secretary is a personal friend of the President of the United States; my friend; a friend of the Secretary of Health, Education & Welfare, and of the Under Secretary. Never is a door closed to you; every door is open to you. You are respected, and the respect will be all the greater when the commentary is constructive, when it is designed to help and not to hinder.

Well, it's sure been nice to be with you. I hope to join you for a few festivities this evening. I must go back to my duties. I want to thank you -- this is the first time I've had a chance to thank some of you. I know that many of you bolted the party line -- I know that many of you came and offered the hand of assistance, the hand of fellowship a few

months ago, and I'm not the kind that forgets. That's one Republican trait that I have and I want you to know that.

(Applause.)

So, my fellow Americans, Republican or Democrat, Independent or whatever you may be, you honored me, many of you, by your friendship and your helpfulness when I needed it and when the President needed it. What we seek to do for you, and what your President seeks to do for you, is to serve now all of the people. You're not elected to serve just a party. Our duty and our privilege is to be President of the United States as is President Lyndon Johnson of the United States of America, Vice-President of the United States as is Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, Vice-President of all of the people of the United States. And in that spirit of love of country, the desire to serve, and of grateful appreciation, I thank you for letting me come to you today to say these words. Thank you. (Applause.)

MR. ROOKE: We will now recess until 2:00 p.m.

(Luncheon recess at 12:25 p.m.)



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