

NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY
FLORIDA DEMOCRATIC PARTY RECEPTION
5th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CAPE KENNEDY, FLORIDA
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Fellow Democrats, another year of challenge is upon us --
leap year.

Those reticent Republicans who have waited so long
in vain to be courted are themselves out courting now.

The proposal itself, of course, is the same as ever:

"Go slow."

"Stand pat."

"Enough for now."

"Time for a pause."

Now tell me -- who ever courted successfully with a proposal like that?

They also have the small problem of their public record.

They say they're for health -- but they voted 93 per cent against Medicare in the House of Representatives.

Education? Oh yes. But three quarters of their Congressmen voted against the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965.

Cities? They want to improve them -- but 88 per cent voted against Model Cities in the House.

I don't think the American people can be wooed and won by that Coalition of Retreat in 1968.

The issues before us are too important...the challenges too great...the need for progressive leadership too urgent...to risk retreat.

The issues are these:

Are we prepared to press on toward the two fundamental necessities of our time -- national security and national development, both at home and abroad...or do we intend to turn back from those responsibilities?

Does this rich country mean to lick slumism? Or do we mean to turn back hopes now aroused in the hearts of families and young people across this country?

Are we ready to guarantee full and equal opportunity for every American in fact as well as in law? Or will we renege on a promise as old as our nation?

Will we extend the full and equitable protection of the law to every citizen of every neighborhood? Or is this country going to settle into a slough of random violence and repression?

Are we going to press ahead with the scientific and technical achievements that mean national strength and greatness in the modern world? Or are we going to timidly accept second class status for America?

John F. Kennedy said: "Peace and freedom do not come cheap, and we are destined -- all of us here today -- to live out most if not all of our lives in uncertainty and challenge and peril."

Do we have the courage to act in the face of uncertainty ... to face up to the perils...and seize the opportunities that are inherent in every challenge?

No, these times do not permit The Pause -- America cannot afford the Coalition of Retreat. And the American people know it.

We Democrats have a concrete action program to keep America moving forward...and it is growing almost daily. You can read it in President Johnson's messages to Congress during the last few weeks:

-- "A charter of renewed hope for the American city" based on local initiative, private investment, community participation and federal support;

-- A partnership between government and private industry to wipe out most of the hard-core unemployment in our country by 1971;

-- An Educational Opportunity Act, to assure that "in America there will be no economic or racial barrier to higher education; that every qualified young person will have all the education he wants and can absorb;"

-- More funds for Head Start...support to states for vocational training...full funding for bi-lingual education programs...a stay-in-school program...and much more.

-- Open housing and federal protection for civil rights workers, which will complete the legal edifice of civil rights in America. I predict that both the Senate and House will pass that civil rights legislation this year.

-- A comprehensive crime control program to provide Americans "the security that they demand and the justice that they deserve." As the President said, 1968 is the year when "the forces of law and order must capture the initiative in the battle against crime.

There is much more: drug control "to stop the sale of slavery to the young"...more protection for the consumer... housing and health.

That all adds up to our blueprint for a more prosperous, more secure, more democratic United States of America.

It adds up not to "big government," but to a Partnership for Progress in the context of our free enterprise system.

It adds up to a Fresh Start for millions of Americans...
for the inner city mother who wants a wholesome environment
for her children...for a father who has never known the
dignity and security of a steady job...for a teenager who
can look ahead to college rather than the streetcorner.

It is necessary.

It is decent.

It is Democratic.

It is a formula for victory in 1968 and progress in years
to come.

Now I have talked to a lot of Democrats around our
country in the last few weeks.

Some of them are concerned about Vietnam -- and who
is not, including the President?

Some of them are concerned about specific parts of
the Johnson-Humphrey domestic program.

All of them, from the President to the youngest Young Democrat, are concerned about people -- people in cities and people on farms...old people and young people...people in need all over America and all over the world, wherever freedom is restricted and opportunity blighted.

That is our Democratic hallmark -- concern...and action.

Adlai Stevenson once observed that "self-examination and criticism are the great and not-so-secret weapons of democracy. Or as Henry Watterson said, 'things have come to a pretty pass when a man can't cudgel his own jackass.' "

But to those who think debate is a sign of weakness within our party...and to those who think discussion means dissension...let me say this:

You just don't know the Democratic Party.

We talk a lot. We love ideas. We enjoy debate.

But when it comes to that critical issue of advance or retreat, Democrats stand united.

When it comes to a choice between decisive action and temporizing with the security of America at home or abroad, Democrats stand united.

And next fall, when America's future is in the balance, Democrats will stand united -- behind President Lyndon B. Johnson...the party...the platform...and the ideals that will move this nation forward to a greater freedom, prosperity and safety.

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