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REMARKS OF HHH

WILLIAM B. BYRON
TESTIMONIAL DINNER
SEPTEMBER 5, 1970

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Tonight we honor an old friend.

An old friend young in heart and young in spirit.

Old only in the length of his service to the people of Waseca
and all the people of the North Star State.

Today, we need more of that sense of service, dedication
and hard work.

Today too many people believe that all you have to do to fulfill your responsibilities as a citizen is state a complaint or offer a criticism. If the problem isn't immediately resolved this proves that the system doesn't work.

Problems are not solved by complaints or slogans.

They are solved by hard work.

They are solved by people who care.

People who are willing to try.

People who will risk failure and keep right on trying.

That is the cut of the man we honor tonight.

Bill Byron has cared.

Bill Byron has tried.

And Bill Byron has succeeded.

The DFL is the political party of, for and by the people of this State because men and women like Bill Byron have made it so.

People working together built this county.

People working together built the DFL.

People working together make the American system work.

Making the system work is really what I want to discuss with you tonight.

Across the length and breadth of America there is struggle.

It is a struggle between a handful of those who would destroy

without reason and those of us who would build and who believe

that we can achieve desired progress working within the framework

of our democratic government.

It is my judgment that the sporadic violence we are now experiencing in urban centers around the country are terrorist attacks.

These are common criminal attacks on people and property and we must act to bring the full force of law to bear on those who seek to destroy. Every agency of law enforcement must be used to stop these despicable and brutal acts.

To meet these acts of terror, we must not panic --- and we must be careful not to play the game that these terrorists want us to play. They hope that we will overreact emotionally and institute repression --- an over response. In this manner they hope that the social fabric of our society will be torn by internal dissension and destroyed.

We are going to avoid that mistake.

Within the law, we will find these criminals, bring them to justice, try them before a jury of their peers in a fair trial and if guilty put them in jail.

Democracy in this country will be preserved --- in spite of these criminal acts.

We must prove to these criminals and the rest of the world our capacity for firm and swift justice.

These criminal terrorists will be given an opportunity --- while languishing in jail --- to reflect on the efficiency and fairness of the American political system.

Beyond this mindless terrorism is the question: whose is the responsibility for meeting these rising tides of terrorism, criminality, and drug abuse in our society.

Some of the problems are interstate --- the movement of narcotics and the shipment of explosives.

For these, we need to have a federal presence.

However, the police power in this government is not vested in Washington --- it is vested in our state capitals and in our city halls.

Our forefathers designed it that way for a reason. In

European countries of the 18th Century national police forces were instruments of repression --- crushing freedom and suppressing civil rights.

The validity of their concept is unchallenged today. We are grateful for the wisdom of those who set that pattern for us. We want to preserve local law enforcement. But we are going to have to work together to see that the job gets done.

That means that when it comes to passing the buck on the problems of crime, terrorism, drug abuse and riots in our society the buck doesn't stop in Washington. It stops right here.

Over the past few decades, the American system has been confronted by Big Problems and we have turned to Big Government for the answers.

Depression, War, Poverty, Health Care, Education and Civil Rights were among those challenges. We meet these national problems by turning increasingly to Big Government for federal legislation.

Federal legislation has provided us with some of the tools ---

- Social Security;

- Medicare;

- Aid to Education;

- Job Training;

- and a host of other programs designed to meet the Big

Problems of our generation.

We may not have provided ultimate answers to these problems.

but we --- Democrats --- have led the way.

Ask the old couple receiving Social Security and Medicare benefits conceived or fought for and passed by a Democratic Congress.

Ask the teacher who has books and equipment provided by Aid to Education legislation conceived of, fought for and passed by Democrats.

Ask the man now a productive member of society because of federal job training programs.

Yes. we have done all these things and much much more. I am proud of what we have done. But we have also lost something.

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Perhaps it can be simply defined as a diminished sense of personal involvement and personal effectiveness.

"What can one man do?"

Isn't that the question? The problems are so vast --- and so complex. Government is so remote.

"What can one man do?"

I say dig in. There's lots of room. We need all the help we can get.

If I get back to Washington, with your help, I am going to bring the Senate of the United States to the people of Minnesota. We are going to hold hearings up and down this State and hear from the people. The people of Minnesota are going to have an opportunity of shaping federal legislation as it effects them. We can do that much together.

But there is much more that we can do.

The people of Minnesota have an immediate responsibility concerning the problems of crime, terrorism, riots and drug abuse.

There is something that we can do about that. We may need financial help from Washington. But remember, the buck stops here.

Councils for Civil Peace must be organized at the state and local level.

The Minnesota Council for Civil Peace should include representation from all economic, religious and racial groups, the state attorney general's office, the National Guard, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as representatives of state and local government.

In addition to providing an avenue of coordination among officials directly charged with law enforcement, the Council on Civil Peace could and should also provide a state community relations service designed to prevent violence, to gain community cooperation and provide a platform for the voices of those who all too often have gone unheard.

This community relations service could provide an early warning system, anticipating civil disorders through its contacts with community leaders.

Where problems of drug abuse exist Councils of Civil Peace could act to assist local communities to organize educational programs for young people and their parents on the facts and dangers of drug abuse. Particular efforts must be made to insure that physicians and law enforcement authorities have every opportunity to participate in the development of drug prevention programs.

Many many times I have heard the complaint of parents that they did not know that their teenage youngster was using drugs.

The opportunity for parental education must be provided. It can be organized through Councils of Civil Peace.

Legislation in Washington will not solve this problem. It can help but it cannot do the job. We are going

to have to do the major portion of that job for ourselves.

Through Councils of Civil Peace we are going to have to organize educational programs in our primary, and secondary schools, as well as on college campuses. Law enforcement officials, doctors, lawyers, ministers, parents and young people are all going to have to be joined in this effort.

We need dialogue in the American Community.

We need understanding.

Congressional hearings and Senate debates are no substitute.

We have to get together --- work together --- in our cities.
in our towns and in our communities.

There is a reservoir of good will in Minnesota.

There is a reservoir of faith in America.

There is hope.

The tools are there.

I say let's roll up our sleeves and get the job done.

I am ready to serve.

I'll need your help.



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