

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

LABOR COUNCIL CONVENTION
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

September 17, 1971

We live in an exciting age -- a time of changing relationships among people, among generations, among governments, among the various sectors of our economy.

These are exciting times because they offer unparalleled opportunities for change -- for a redirection of our national energies toward securing peace and the good life for all.

I think it is an appropriate time to look at the role of organized labor in our nation to see where we have been and to think about where we must go.

Organized labor has come a long way:

-- Collective bargaining is now a recognized right for all working men.

-- The standard of living has been increased for working men and women. We have achieved better incomes, paid vacations, health benefits, improved working conditions.

-- Most of us have the opportunity to send our children to school, to give them a better chance in life than we have had.

And in the process of making legitimate gains for its members and for the nation, labor has served a larger role -- that of the nation's social conscience.

Millions of Americans have looked to labor for help, for assistance, for sympathy, and for compassion.

And labor has responded. It has been in the forefront in the struggle to achieve human rights, and fair labor practices, minimum wages, child labor laws, and much more.

Organized labor in America has provided leadership and vision.

And it must continue to do so.

There is a danger that all of us must face:

When we are successful, when we have fought the battles and made great gains, there is a tendency, to become complacent -- to hold our own, to consolidate and zealously protect what we have, rather than to seek and meet new challenges, to open new doors, or to advocate bold and imaginative policies.

To create, to plan, to think ahead -- this is what all of us -- including labor -- must do now.

What is our agenda?

All of us -- including labor -- must continue the fight for human rights and human decency. Labor must open its ranks to all men, regardless of nationality or color, for job discrimination has no place in American society.

We must take up the cause of the forgotten worker -- the migrant farm laborer, who has not shared in the gains of most of the rest of us.

We must act now to reform the welfare system -- a system that now tragically fails both the taxpayer and the recipient.

We must work for a more progressive tax system and a redistribution of public priorities:

I say, it is time to change priorities when the bottom 20 percent of all American families have only five percent of our national income.

I say, it is time to change priorities when 25 million people live in poverty.

It is time to change priorities when the working man is so strapped by high interest rates and rising prices that his hard-won wage increases are wiped out.

It is time to change priorities when federal housing funds of over \$3 billion go to middle income earners and the affluent, while the poor get only \$820 million.

It is time to change priorities when less than half the poor can afford to buy something as basic to most of us as life insurance, and when less than 15 percent of the poor have adequate medical care.

Yes, it is time to change priorities. And labor should be -- must be -- in the vanguard of our efforts to change what needs changing. The working men and women of America have a stake in more than wages and hours and working conditions.

Labor has a stake -- a crucial stake -- in liveable cities, in peaceful cities, in progressive cities.

Labor has a stake in child care centers, in the development of youth, in learning and education.

Labor has a stake in clean air, in unpolluted streams, in the preservation of our forest and wilderness areas.

Labor has a stake in National Health Insurance, in preventive health care, and modern efficient hospitals.

Labor has a stake in women's rights, in minority rights, in human rights.

In short, labor has a big stake in the development of positive social policy -- for the poor, for blacks, for the city dweller and the farmer, for middle and moderate income earners, for the powerless -- for all Americans.

Labor's bigger pay check will not mean much unless we have liveable cities, clean air, decent health care, peace, and freedom and human dignity.

We cannot afford complacency.

We cannot afford the status quo.

We cannot afford to focus narrowly on the past.

Labor must look to the future and continue its role as the social conscience of our nation.

I am proud to join you in that task.

#

Donal Roe

Ray Mintz

Herreck Roth

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Frank Evans

LABOR COUNCIL CONVENTION
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

SEPTEMBER 17, 1971

ⓧ Mexican Independence
Day - yesterday

ⓧ Cope

WE LIVE IN AN EXCITING AGE -- A TIME OF CHANGING
RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PEOPLE, AMONG GENERATIONS, AMONG
GOVERNMENTS, AMONG THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF OUR ECONOMY.

THESE ARE EXCITING TIMES BECAUSE THEY OFFER
UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE -- FOR A
REDIRECTION OF OUR NATIONAL ENERGIES TOWARD SECURING
PEACE AND THE GOOD LIFE FOR ALL.

organize
~~I THINK~~ IT IS AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO LOOK AT THE ROLE
OF ORGANIZED LABOR IN OUR NATION TO SEE WHERE WE HAVE BEEN
AND TO THINK ABOUT WHERE WE MUST GO.!

yes ORGANIZED LABOR HAS COME A LONG WAY:

MILLIONS OF AMERICANS HAVE LOOKED TO ^{organized} LABOR FOR HELP,

FOR ASSISTANCE, FOR SYMPATHY, AND FOR COMPASSION.

AND LABOR HAS RESPONDED! IT HAS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT
(Sgt. Joe. Hudson)

IN THE STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE HUMAN RIGHTS, AND FAIR LABOR

Soc Security
PRACTICES, MINIMUM WAGES, CHILD LABOR LAWS, AND MUCH MORE.
and to Education, medicine!

ORGANIZED LABOR IN AMERICA HAS PROVIDED LEADERSHIP

AND VISION. Great men - Geo Meany,

Wm. Green, Phil Murray, Sidney Hillman,
A. F. Whitney, Dan Tobin,
Walter Reuther, Dave Delaney,
A. Philip Randolph, John Lewis

and many more -

11 The dogmas of the quiet past are
inadequate to the stormy present.
The occasion is piled high with
difficulty, and we must rise with
the occasion.
As our case is new, so must we
think anew.
We must disenthrall ourselves.

L AND IT MUST CONTINUE TO DO SO.

You know, THERE IS A DANGER THAT ALL OF US MUST FACE:

a danger

L WHEN WE ARE SUCCESSFUL, WHEN WE HAVE FOUGHT THE BATTLES AND MADE GREAT GAINS, THERE IS A TENDENCY, TO BECOME COMPLACENT -- TO HOLD OUR OWN, TO CONSOLIDATE AND ZEALOUSLY PROTECT WHAT WE HAVE, RATHER THAN TO SEEK AND MEET NEW CHALLENGES, TO OPEN NEW DOORS, OR TO ADVOCATE BOLD AND *new* IMAGINATIVE POLICIES. (*Lincoln*)

TO CREATE, TO PLAN, TO THINK AHEAD -- THIS IS WHAT ALL OF US -- INCLUDING LABOR -- MUST DO NOW. ! *stray for America*

L WHAT IS OUR AGENDA? -- *what are our goals*

L ALL OF US -- INCLUDING LABOR -- MUST CONTINUE THE

FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN DECENCY. L LABOR MUST OPEN

ITS RANKS TO ALL MEN, REGARDLESS OF NATIONALITY OR COLOR, FOR

JOB DISCRIMINATION HAS NO PLACE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY.

L WE MUST TAKE UP THE CAUSE OF THE FORGOTTEN WORKER --

THE MIGRANT FARM LABORER, WHO HAS NOT SHARED IN THE GAINS

OF MOST OF THE REST OF US.

L WE MUST ACT NOW TO REFORM THE WELFARE SYSTEM -- A

SYSTEM THAT NOW TRAGICALLY FAILS BOTH THE TAXPAYER AND THE

RECIPIENT.

L WE MUST WORK FOR A MORE PROGRESSIVE TAX SYSTEM AND

A REDISTRIBUTION OF PUBLIC PRIORITIES:

and it has.

↳ I SAY, IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES WHEN THE BOTTOM
20 PERCENT OF ALL AMERICAN FAMILIES HAVE ONLY FIVE PERCENT
OF OUR NATIONAL INCOME.

↳ I SAY, IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES WHEN 25 MILLION
PEOPLE LIVE IN POVERTY.

↳ IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES WHEN THE WORKING MAN
IS SO STRAPPED BY HIGH INTEREST RATES AND RISING PRICES
THAT HIS HARD-WON WAGE INCREASES ARE WIPED OUT!

↳ IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES WHEN FEDERAL HOUSING
FUNDS OF OVER \$3 BILLION GO TO MIDDLE INCOME EARNERS AND
THE ~~AFFLUENT~~ ^{wealthy} ~~lower income and~~ WHILE THE POOR GET ONLY \$820 MILLION.

IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES WHEN LESS THAN HALF

THE POOR CAN AFFORD TO BUY SOMETHING AS BASIC TO MOST OF US

AS LIFE INSURANCE, AND WHEN LESS THAN 15 PERCENT OF THE

POOR HAVE ADEQUATE MEDICAL CARE

YES, IT IS TIME TO CHANGE PRIORITIES AND LABOR

SHOULD BE -- MUST BE -- IN THE VANGUARD OF OUR EFFORTS TO

CHANGE WHAT NEEDS CHANGING. THE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF

AMERICA HAVE A STAKE IN MORE THAN WAGES AND HOURS AND WORKING

CONDITIONS.

LABOR HAS A STAKE -- A CRUCIAL STAKE -- IN LIVEABLE

CITIES, IN PEACEFUL CITIES, IN PROGRESSIVE CITIES.

LABOR HAS A STAKE IN CHILD CARE CENTERS, IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH, IN LEARNING AND EDUCATION.

L LABOR HAS A STAKE IN CLEAN AIR, IN UNPOLLUTED STREAMS,

IN THE PRESERVATION OF OUR FOREST AND WILDERNESS AREAS,

L LABOR HAS A STAKE IN ^{comprehensive medical care} NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE, IN

PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE, AND MODERN EFFICIENT HOSPITALS,

L LABOR HAS A STAKE IN WOMEN'S RIGHTS, IN MINORITY

RIGHTS, IN HUMAN RIGHTS,

L IN SHORT, LABOR HAS A BIG STAKE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
POSITIVE SOCIAL POLICY -- FOR THE POOR, FOR BLACKS, ^{Inchicanos} FOR THE

CITY DWELLER AND THE FARMER, FOR MIDDLE AND MODERATE

INCOME EARNERS, FOR THE POWERLESS -- FOR ALL AMERICANS.

~~Democracy Cannot~~

" The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate
for the stormy present.

The occasion is piled high with
difficulty, and we must rise
with the occasion. As our case
is new, so must we think anew.
We must decentralize ourselves;

La
LABOR'S BIGGER PAY CHECK WILL NOT MEAN MUCH UNLESS WE

HAVE LIVEABLE CITIES, CLEAN AIR, DECENT HEALTH CARE, safe

neighborhoods,

PEACE, AND FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY.

WE CANNOT AFFORD COMPLACENCY.

WE CANNOT AFFORD THE STATUS QUO.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO FOCUS NARROWLY ON THE PAST.

Sincerely

we
LABOR MUST LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND CONTINUE ITS ROLE

AS THE SOCIAL CONSCIENCE OF OUR NATION.

I AM PROUD TO JOIN YOU IN THAT TASK.

" I see America, not in the setting sun
of a black night of despair ahead of us,
I see America in the crimson light of a
rising sun fresh from the burning creative
hand of God. I see great days ahead -
great days possible to men and women
of will and vision"

Carl Sandburg.



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