

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

UMD CONVOCATION

Duluth, Minnesota

May 29, 1975

Your work here is serious business. I like to think that each of you is on the way to a personal and collective rendezvous with destiny, in Franklin Roosevelt's words. Each of you is -- or should be -- struggling with the difficult problems which threaten our national well-being and your own future.

The choices we face, the decisions we make the priorities we establish today will determine what kind of future your children -- and my grandchildren -- can look forward to.

You, more than any of us, must be deeply interested in establishing policies which will assure a quality of life in America in the coming years.

We have a staggering, unfinished agenda including health care, education, housing, care for the elderly, employment for the jobless, land-use, resource management and development.

How will we solve these problems? How will we provide for the human needs of our people now, and ten years from now -- twenty years from now?

We must begin with a willingness to risk, to pioneer -- a sense of optimism and self-confidence -- a capacity for compromise and accommodation.

Time and again, these three characteristics have brought us through national trials and difficulties far more imposing than anything that confronts us today.

We survived adversity and progressed as a free nation by risking greatly, by retaining our self-confidence and optimism, and by compromising what seemed to be totally hostile and incompatible points of view.

As a result, the injustices were rooted out, our democracy refined, and the security and happiness of our people advanced.

Two hundred years ago we the people came together to form a more perfect union. We took a risk that had never been taken before in the history of mankind.

The 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence on that hot, humid July day in Philadelphia were effectively putting their names to their own death warrants.

I continue to be impressed today over how relatively young these men were who accomplished so much. Nineteen of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence were in their 40's. Sixteen were in their 30's. Two were only 27.

In 1776, Thomas Jefferson was 33, James Madison was 25, Alexander Hamilton was 21.

It was not the risk of rebellion, for many rebellions had been tried and failed. Rather, it was the risk of a grand experiment in democracy -- of forming a government under which all the people were sovereign as well as subject, rulers as well as ruled, united as well as free.

But we face new challenges today in continuing this "experiment."

Minnesota, itself, offers an excellent case in point. Minnesota will face the most serious threat to its economic prosperity during the next 10 years, due to impending energy shortages.

-- Canada plans to phase out oil exports to Minnesota and the rest of the United States by 1984.

-- Minnesota's three refineries are almost 100 percent dependent on Canadian crude oil. They have almost no other sources of supply. It will be a long and costly process to develop alternative oil sources.

-- The impact of the Canadian cutback on the operations of our refineries could be disastrous for Minnesota and the other Northern Tier states. The closing of the three Minnesota refineries alone would add 4,600 workers to our unemployment and welfare rolls and lose over \$46 million in wages and salaries.

We all recognize that our economic recovery will mean renewed pressures on our energy resources.

A wide variety of creative proposals are being studied. Senator Jackson and I, for example, have introduced the National Energy Conservation Act of 1975.

It puts the major long-term burden of energy conservation on American technology and innovation. These are the keys to energy conservation. The free enterprise system is challenged to develop cheap, effective autos, appliances, and machines that save energy. American know-how is taxed, not consumers.

As I see it, at this time, we can look for major energy initiatives to flow quickly from Congress in the coming months. And as a result:

-- we will see gradually rising natural gas and oil prices.

-- we will see improved building insulation standards;

-- we will see mandatory reform in utility price practices, including peak-load pricing and abolition of reduced-step rate schedules;

-- we may well see mandatory energy efficiency standards for appliances and industrial equipment processes;

-- we will see mandatory truth-in-energy labelling of appliances and autos;

-- we will see specific tax incentives for solar energy devices, particularly for space heating purposes;

-- we will see a much greater reliance on coal to drive our factories and to produce electricity;

-- natural gas will be limited mainly to residential use, with only a base minimum going to industrial users -- thereby cutting down, for example, its wasteful use as a boiler fuel;

-- we will see a continuation of oil and gas price controls. Prices will be permitted to rise gradually to stimulate production, while not at the same time granting windfall profits to producers.

-- and, finally, we will see a permanent shift toward a rising dependence on electricity -- matched by rising dependence on the sea and the sun as sources of electrical energy.

Yes, our national priorities are in bad shape. But you didn't need Hubert Humphrey to tell you that.

The depths of the current recession and the seriousness of the present economic crisis require bold action. We cannot live with the Administration's plan. It is unacceptable. It accepts an unemployment rate of at least 6 percent for the rest of this decade. This is no time to listen to the quaking voices of the faint of heart.

Every day that we delay costs thousands of additional Americans jobs and income.

And there are many things that we can do that will make a difference.

First, we can and we must take better care of the unfortunate victims of recession. This means both an extension of unemployment compensation and an increase in its level. Today the average unemployment check is a mere \$65 a week -- a national disgrace.

We can and we must provide an emergency program of health insurance for those who lose coverage because they are now out of work.

Second, we cannot and will not scrimp on Social Security, on retirement benefits, or on food stamps, as the President has proposed. Congress rejects this cruel proposal.

We need to see to it that financial assistance comes from the federal government to those state and local governments facing a major fiscal crisis. Unless this is done, they will be forced to cut back drastically on jobs and services or increase taxes substantially.

Tax cuts and spending programs will be useless if interest rates stay high and credit tight. The policies of the Federal Reserve Board have been a major cause of the current recession. These policies must be changed, or the Federal Reserve Board itself must be changed.

And we must begin to do a much better job of planning for the future of our economy and for the wise use of our evermore limited resources. If we are to provide a better life for all Americans in the years to come, we must begin to plan for it today.

Third, we must get the economy moving again. And to do this:

-- We need a greatly expanded program of public service jobs capable of providing more than 1 million people with work immediately. Congress has passed legislation to help achieve this objective, and the President must sign this essential legislation.

-- We need to set interest rates for housing at 6 percent and get hundreds of thousands of construction workers back on the job. There is no way out of a national recession while housing is in a depression. If we can afford to lend the Russians millions of dollars at 6 or 7 percent, why can't we do likewise to help our people live decently?

In our first hundred years as a nation, we didn't have to think about priorities. As a fledgling democracy with no place to go but up, we could afford to open the floodgates of technology. We were heirs to a great fortune in land, natural resources, skill and humanity. No one saw the need to check the progress every now and then to see if it all fit together.

We ran headlong into the brave new world, tripping over our humanity along the way. Will we continue to be gobbled up by our own creations, or will we begin to make them work for us?

If you don't remember anything else from my talk here today, I want you to recognize the urgency of this challenge.

What we in the government do now -- or fail to do -- will literally determine your future. Our failure to act now can cast grave doubts on whether you will have a future at all.

In closing I want to remind you of what Victor Hugo said.

"The future has several names. For the weak, it is the impossible. For the faint-hearted, it is the unknown. For the thoughtful and valiant, it is ideal. The challenge is urgent. The task is large. The time is now."

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EACH OF YOU IS ON THE WAY TO A PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE  
RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY, IN FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT'S WORDS.  
EACH OF YOU IS -- OR SHOULD BE -- STRUGGLING WITH THE DIFFICULT  
PROBLEMS WHICH THREATEN OUR NATIONAL WELL-BEING AND YOUR OWN  
FUTURE.

THE CHOICES WE FACE, THE DECISIONS WE MAKE, THE PRIORITIES  
WE ESTABLISH TODAY WILL DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF FUTURE YOUR  
CHILDREN -- AND MY GRANDCHILDREN -- CAN LOOK FORWARD TO.

YOU, MORE THAN ANY OF US, MUST BE DEEPLY INTERESTED IN  
ESTABLISHING POLICIES WHICH WILL ASSURE A QUALITY OF LIFE IN  
AMERICA IN THE COMING YEARS.

h WE HAVE A STAGGERING, UNFINISHED AGENDA INCLUDING HEALTH  
CARE, EDUCATION, HOUSING, CARE FOR THE ELDERLY, EMPLOYMENT  
FOR THE JOBLESS, LAND-USE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT.

h HOW WILL WE SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS? HOW WILL WE PROVIDE FOR  
THE HUMAN NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE NOW, AND TEN YEARS FROM NOW --  
TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW?

h WE MUST BEGIN WITH A WILLINGNESS TO RISK, TO PIONEER --  
A SENSE OF OPTIMISM AND SELF-CONFIDENCE -- A CAPACITY FOR  
COMPROMISE AND ACCOMMODATION.

h TIME AND AGAIN, THESE THREE CHARACTERISTICS HAVE BROUGHT  
US THROUGH NATIONAL TRIALS AND DIFFICULTIES FAR MORE IMPOSING  
THAN ANYTHING THAT CONFRONTS US TODAY.

↳ WE SURVIVED ADVERSITY AND PROGRESSED AS A FREE NATION  
BY RISKING GREATLY, BY RETAINING OUR SELF-CONFIDENCE AND  
OPTIMISM, AND BY COMPROMISING WHAT SEEMED TO BE TOTALLY  
HOSTILE AND INCOMPATIBLE POINTS OF VIEW.

↳ AS A RESULT, THE INJUSTICES WERE ROOTED OUT, OUR DEMOCRACY  
REFINED, AND THE SECURITY AND HAPPINESS OF OUR PEOPLE ADVANCED.

↳ TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO WE THE PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER TO FORM  
A MORE PERFECT UNION, WE TOOK A RISK THAT HAD NEVER BEEN TAKEN  
BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND.

↳ THE 56 MEN WHO SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ON  
THAT HOT, HUMID JULY DAY IN PHILADELPHIA WERE EFFECTIVELY  
PUTTING THEIR NAMES TO THEIR OWN DEATH WARRANTS.

I CONTINUE TO BE IMPRESSED TODAY OVER HOW RELATIVELY YOUNG  
THESE MEN WERE WHO ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH. NINETEEN OF THE  
56 SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WERE IN THEIR  
40's. SIXTEEN WERE IN THEIR 30's. TWO WERE ONLY 27.  
< IN 1776; THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS 33, JAMES MADISON WAS 25,  
ALEXANDER HAMILTON WAS 21.  
< IT WAS NOT THE RISK OF REBELLION, FOR MANY REBELLIONS  
HAD BEEN TRIED AND FAILED. RATHER, IT WAS THE RISK OF A GRAND  
EXPERIMENT IN DEMOCRACY -- OF FORMING A GOVERNMENT UNDER WHICH  
ALL THE PEOPLE WERE SOVEREIGN AS WELL AS SUBJECT, RULERS AS  
WELL AS RULED, UNITED AS WELL AS FREE.

BUT WE FACE NEW CHALLENGES TODAY IN CONTINUING THIS  
"EXPERIMENT."

MINNESOTA, ITSELF, OFFERS AN EXCELLENT CASE IN POINT.  
MINNESOTA WILL FACE THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT TO ITS ECONOMIC  
PROSPERITY DURING THE NEXT 10 YEARS, DUE TO IMPENDING ENERGY  
SHORTAGES.

-- CANADA PLANS TO PHASE OUT OIL EXPORTS TO MINNESOTA  
AND THE REST OF THE UNITED STATES BY 1984.

-- MINNESOTA'S THREE REFINERIES ARE ALMOST 100 PERCENT  
DEPENDENT ON CANADIAN CRUDE OIL. THEY HAVE ALMOST NO OTHER  
SOURCES OF SUPPLY. IT WILL BE A LONG AND COSTLY PROCESS TO  
DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE OIL SOURCES.

-- THE IMPACT OF THE CANADIAN CUTBACK ON THE OPERATIONS OF OUR REFINERIES COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR MINNESOTA AND THE OTHER NORTHERN TIER STATES. THE CLOSING OF THE THREE MINNESOTA REFINERIES ALONE WOULD ADD 4,600 WORKERS TO OUR UNEMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE ROLLS AND LOSE OVER \$46 MILLION IN WAGES AND SALARIES.

WE ALL RECOGNIZE THAT OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY WILL MEAN RENEWED PRESSURES ON OUR ENERGY RESOURCES.

A WIDE VARIETY OF CREATIVE PROPOSALS ARE BEING STUDIED. SENATOR JACKSON AND I, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE INTRODUCED THE NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT OF 1975.

IT PUTS THE MAJOR LONG-TERM BURDEN OF ENERGY CONSERVATION ON AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, THESE ARE THE KEYS TO ENERGY CONSERVATION. THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM IS CHALLENGED TO DEVELOP CHEAP, EFFECTIVE AUTOS, APPLIANCES, AND MACHINES THAT SAVE ENERGY. AMERICAN KNOW-HOW IS TAXED, NOT CONSUMERS.

AS I SEE IT, AT THIS TIME, WE CAN LOOK FOR MAJOR ENERGY INITIATIVES TO FLOW QUICKLY FROM CONGRESS IN THE COMING MONTHS.

AND AS A RESULT:

- L- WE WILL SEE GRADUALLY RISING NATURAL GAS AND OIL PRICES;
- L- WE WILL SEE IMPROVED BUILDING INSULATION STANDARDS;
- L- WE WILL SEE MANDATORY REFORM IN UTILITY PRICE PRACTICES,

INCLUDING PEAK-LOAD PRICING AND ABOLITION OF REDUCED-STEP

RATE SCHEDULES;

L-- WE MAY WELL SEE MANDATORY ENERGY EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

FOR APPLIANCES AND INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT PROCESSES;

L-- WE WILL SEE MANDATORY TRUTH-IN-ENERGY LABELLING OF

APPLIANCES AND AUTOS;

L-- WE WILL SEE SPECIFIC TAX INCENTIVES FOR SOLAR ENERGY

DEVICES, PARTICULARLY FOR SPACE HEATING PURPOSES;

L-- WE WILL SEE A MUCH GREATER RELIANCE ON COAL TO DRIVE

OUR FACTORIES AND TO PRODUCE ELECTRICITY;

L-- NATURAL GAS WILL BE LIMITED MAINLY TO RESIDENTIAL

USE, WITH ONLY A BASE MINIMUM GOING TO INDUSTRIAL USERS --

THEREBY CUTTING DOWN, FOR EXAMPLE, ITS WASTEFUL USE AS A

BOILER FUEL;

-- WE WILL SEE A CONTINUATION OF OIL AND GAS PRICE CONTROLS. PRICES WILL BE PERMITTED TO RISE GRADUALLY TO STIMULATE PRODUCTION, WHILE NOT AT THE SAME TIME GRANTING WINDFALL PROFITS TO PRODUCERS;

-- AND, FINALLY, WE WILL SEE A PERMANENT SHIFT TOWARD A RISING DEPENDENCE ON ELECTRICITY -- MATCHED BY RISING DEPENDENCE ON THE SEA AND THE SUN AS SOURCES OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY.

*Nuclear*  
DEPENDENCE ON THE SEA AND THE SUN AS SOURCES OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY.

Yes, OUR NATIONAL PRIORITIES ARE IN BAD SHAPE. BUT YOU DIDN'T NEED HUBERT HUMPHREY TO TELL YOU THAT.

THE DEPTHS OF THE CURRENT RECESSION AND THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PRESENT ECONOMIC CRISIS REQUIRE BOLD ACTION. WE CANNOT LIVE WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S PLAN. IT IS UNACCEPTABLE. IT ACCEPTS AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF AT LEAST 6 PERCENT FOR THE REST OF THIS DECADE. THIS IS NO TIME TO LISTEN TO THE QUAKING VOICES OF THE FAINT OF HEART.

EVERY DAY THAT WE DELAY COSTS THOUSANDS OF ADDITIONAL AMERICANS JOBS AND INCOME.

AND THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT WE CAN DO THAT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

FIRST, WE CAN AND WE MUST TAKE BETTER CARE OF THE UNFORTUNATE VICTIMS OF RECESSION. THIS MEANS BOTH AN EXTENSION OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND AN INCREASE IN ITS LEVEL. TODAY THE AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT CHECK IS A MERE \$65 A WEEK -- A NATIONAL DISGRACE.

WE CAN AND WE MUST PROVIDE AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THOSE WHO LOSE COVERAGE BECAUSE THEY ARE NOW OUT OF WORK.

SECOND, WE CANNOT AND WILL NOT SCRIMP ON SOCIAL SECURITY, ON RETIREMENT BENEFITS, OR ON FOOD STAMPS, AS THE PRESIDENT HAS PROPOSED. CONGRESS REJECTS THIS CRUEL PROPOSAL.

↳ WE NEED TO SEE TO IT THAT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMES FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THOSE STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FACING A MAJOR FISCAL CRISIS. UNLESS THIS IS DONE, THEY WILL BE FORCED TO CUT BACK DRASTICALLY ON JOBS AND SERVICES OR INCREASE TAXES SUBSTANTIALLY.

↳ TAX CUTS AND SPENDING PROGRAMS WILL BE USELESS IF INTEREST RATES STAY HIGH AND CREDIT TIGHT. THE POLICIES OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD HAVE BEEN A MAJOR CAUSE OF THE CURRENT RECESSION.

↳ THESE POLICIES MUST BE CHANGED, OR THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD ITSELF MUST BE CHANGED.

h AND WE MUST BEGIN TO DO A MUCH BETTER JOB OF PLANNING FOR  
THE FUTURE OF OUR ECONOMY AND FOR THE WISE USE OF OUR EVERMORE  
LIMITED RESOURCES. IF WE ARE TO PROVIDE A BETTER LIFE FOR  
ALL AMERICANS IN THE YEARS TO COME, WE MUST BEGIN TO PLAN FOR  
IT TODAY.

THIRD, WE MUST GET THE ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN. AND TO DO THIS:

-- WE NEED A GREATLY EXPANDED PROGRAM OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
JOBS CAPABLE OF PROVIDING MORE THAN 1 MILLION PEOPLE WITH  
WORK IMMEDIATELY. CONGRESS HAS PASSED LEGISLATION TO HELP  
ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, AND THE PRESIDENT MUST SIGN THIS  
ESSENTIAL LEGISLATION.

-- WE NEED TO SET INTEREST RATES FOR HOUSING AT 6 PERCENT AND GET HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BACK ON THE JOB. THERE IS NO WAY OUT OF A NATIONAL RECESSION WHILE HOUSING IS IN A DEPRESSION. IF WE CAN AFFORD TO LEND THE RUSSIANS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AT 6 OR 7 PERCENT, WHY CAN'T WE DO LIKEWISE TO HELP OUR PEOPLE LIVE DECENTLY?

↳ IN OUR FIRST HUNDRED YEARS AS A NATION, WE DIDN'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT PRIORITIES. ↳ AS A FLEDGLING DEMOCRACY WITH NO PLACE TO GO BUT UP, WE COULD AFFORD TO OPEN THE FLOODGATES OF TECHNOLOGY. WE WERE HEIRS TO A GREAT FORTUNE IN LAND, NATURAL RESOURCES, SKILL AND HUMANITY. NO ONE SAW THE NEED TO CHECK THE PROGRESS EVERY NOW AND THEN TO SEE IF IT ALL FIT TOGETHER.

WE RAN HEADLONG INTO THE BRAVE NEW WORLD, TRIPPING OVER  
OUR HUMANITY ALONG THE WAY. WILL WE CONTINUE TO BE GOBBLED  
UP BY OUR OWN CREATIONS, OR WILL WE BEGIN TO MAKE THEM WORK  
FOR US?

IF YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ELSE FROM MY TALK HERE  
TODAY, I WANT YOU TO RECOGNIZE THE URGENCY OF THIS CHALLENGE.

WHAT WE IN THE GOVERNMENT DO NOW -- OR FAIL TO DO -- WILL  
LITERALLY DETERMINE YOUR FUTURE. OUR FAILURE TO ACT NOW CAN  
CAST GRAVE DOUBTS ON WHETHER YOU WILL HAVE A FUTURE AT ALL.

IN CLOSING I WANT TO REMIND YOU OF WHAT VICTOR HUGO SAID.

"THE FUTURE HAS SEVERAL NAMES, FOR THE WEAK, IT IS THE IMPOSSIBLE, FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED, IT IS THE UNKNOWN, FOR THE THOUGHTFUL AND VALIANT, IT IS IDEAL, THE CHALLENGE IS URGENT, THE TASK IS LARGE, THE TIME IS NOW."

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