

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
VOCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUBS OF AMERICA  
MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION

St. Paul, Minnesota

March 13, 1976

It is a pleasure to be with all of my friends in the Minnesota Association of Vocational Industrial Clubs of America once again.

The enthusiasm your clubs create and the talent your clubs develop is something in which everyone of you can take great pride. Your association and the work of our vocational education system have provided our young people with an opportunity to achieve the highest level of technical skill possible.

The product of this system -- our highly trained and dedicated workers -- have made Minnesota an attractive state in which industry can locate. It also has made it possible for our citizens to maintain one of the highest standards of living in our nation.

Three words are heard over and over again at your conference. These are the words skill -- competition -- leadership. It certainly is no coincidence that these three important words are heard together.

We all know, because we have seen it over and over again in America, that competition -- in the economy, in our schools, in the political sphere and elsewhere -- has sharpened skills and given leadership an opportunity to emerge.

It is no secret that competition in our economic system is what has kept it pre-eminent in world commerce. All of us, particularly those who represent you, must do their utmost to assure that lively competition continues in America.

Your events this weekend and throughout the year call on each of you to do your very best. It is this desire, this determination, to improve, to do better, that has made our nation great.

It is this attitude toward work and toward challenges in our society that is responsible for the standard of living and quality of life that we so uniquely enjoy in Minnesota.

But we have serious problems in America today.

Our economic system is not working as it should. With 7.6 percent of the labor force "officially" unemployed and over 10 percent "actually" unemployed, we are wasting skills and talent and people at a totally unacceptable rate. Moreover, with 20 to 25 percent of our nation's industrial plant and equipment standing idle, we are squandering our nation's vast industrial resource.

The Great Recession of 1974 - 1975 will cost Americans well over one trillion dollars in incomes not earned and goods and services not produced in this decade. This is a tragic and colossal waste, a waste that will cost every American thousands of dollars in the next five years.

For America's young people the situation is even worse. Our nation's inability to provide talented young Americans with decent jobs at good pay borders on the criminal.

While the unemployment situation has improved slightly in the last several months, the problem of unemployment among our young people, particularly those looking for a full time job with career potential for the first time, has not improved.

As Chairman of the Joint Economic Committee, I have held a series of hearings throughout the country on this matter in the past few months. Hearings in Chicago, Atlanta, Boston, New York, and Los Angeles have convinced me that we slowly are choking off the talent and enthusiasm of young people at an appalling rate.

Today in America 1.8 million young Americans -- under 20 years of age -- are looking for jobs and not finding them. Huge numbers of people in their 20's are having the same problem. Of course, many young people have either given up looking or simply have taken jobs that call for much less talent and determination than they have.

Teenage unemployment -- particularly among minorities in our inner cities -- is a cancer eating away at the social fabric of America. It is socially destructive, morally degrading, economically wasteful and must be politically unacceptable.

In January of this year, 19.9 percent of those under 20 years of age actively seeking jobs could find none. However, for blacks under 20 years of age, unemployment was 34.6 percent as we started this year.

Students graduating this June -- and there will be about 1.5 million coming into the job market at all levels -- do not face a bright future. The national rate of unemployment will still be well over seven percent and seven million people.

Of course, here in Minnesota our economy is somewhat healthier and our unemployment rate, hopefully, will be somewhat less. Therefore, the chances of our graduates getting jobs will be a little better than in many other areas of the country. But they will be nothing like the kinds of opportunities that they should have and could have in a healthy economy.

The combination of recession level unemployment and double-digit inflation in the past two years clearly indicates that our economic system isn't working.

It is time for a thorough re-examination of our traditional economic theories and the policies they imply. And, since the problems that you face today and in the future largely will be dependent on economic conditions, you and all other young Americans have the greatest stake and must fully participate in this process.

Today more than ever America needs strong progressive national leadership. It needs leadership that will reverse the neglect and eliminate the waste that has cost all Americans so dearly. We need progressive, compassionate leadership that clearly sees what the problems are and is unafraid to act on them.

It is time for the timid and the nay sayers to step down. Americans don't need a cheerleader standing on the sidelines telling us what we can't do. We need a strong and forceful leader showing all Americans what we can do.

There is much to be done in America. We have roads to be built and improved, housing and community facilities that are needed, hospitals and schools to be built, reforestation to be undertaken, and urban centers that must be repaired and rehabilitated.

There is much to be done in America, and much that can be done if we put America back to work. I believe that every American who is able and willing to work should have an opportunity to do so at a decent wage. If we make this possible we can meet most of our needs and use all of our tremendous skills.

I want able-bodied people on the job and off welfare. I want people working in private jobs to the maximum extent possible. I want people contributing to America's bounty and not sapping its abundance.

Let me remind you that every one percent of unemployment in the U.S. costs the U.S. Treasury an estimated \$17 billion in lost tax revenues and increased spending for the unemployed. This results from a \$12 billion or more drop in tax revenues and a \$5 billion increase in the cost of unemployment compensation, food stamps and welfare. The 8.5 percent average unemployment in 1975 added about \$75 billion to our nation's budget deficit -- just about the entire amount!

\* \* \*

Let me conclude these remarks by urging you to take an active interest in your political system. Our founding fathers were in many cases not much older than you when they did their most important duty for their nation. In 1776, Thomas Jefferson was 33 years old, James Madison was 25, and Alexander Hamilton was 21.

At 22 years of age George Washington was a Lieutenant Colonel and a year later was the Commander in Chief of all the Virginia militia.

When Alexander Hamilton was 20 he was an impassioned and effective pamphleteer in defense of colonial policies. A year later he was a Lieutenant Colonel on George Washington's personal staff.

As you look to your futures remember how young these men were when they did great things. Young people can have a tremendous impact on their society, and they should. After all the political decisions of today will build the America in which you and your families will have to live in the years to come.

You should have something to say about it.

Those who are young ought to have a great sense of purpose and idealism as they step forward to explore the future. And traditionally it has been part of the American character to be optimistic -- to have faith and confidence in the future.

Our whole history is filled with adventure and pioneering. Americans through the years have opened up a continent, developed a new nation. We have shown the world new technologies in agriculture, in medicine, in education and transportation -- yes, in every aspect of life.

You are in the very spring of your life. Now is the time for you to question and to probe -- to gain new understanding and to live each day to its fullest.

I sense a new spirit dawning in America. I find it wherever I travel. It is a new spirit and it is the spirit born of your generation.

A long nightmare of confusion and dashed hopes for all too many Americans is going to end, because at the root of the American experience is the determination not to lower expectations, but to engage in bold experiments.

So do your utmost. Continue to compete, continue to develop your skills, but do not neglect involvement in the politics of your country.

Your political system can thrive only if you understand and involve yourselves in the decisions and the judgments and the new ideas of the day.

If the ideas are good, embrace them. If they're bad, reject them.

You can make a difference if you become informed and involved. As Americans, you have no other choice.

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Sandra Swellman  
Roger Koziolek

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

VOCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUBS OF AMERICA

VICA Skills Olympics  
MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

MARCH 13, 1976

W. H. Emory

It is a pleasure to be with all of my friends in the  
MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF VOCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUBS OF  
AMERICA ONCE AGAIN.

The ENTHUSIASM YOUR CLUBS CREATE AND THE TALENT YOUR CLUBS  
DEVELOP IS SOMETHING IN WHICH EVERYONE OF YOU CAN TAKE GREAT PRIDE.

Your ASSOCIATION AND THE WORK OF OUR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM  
HAVE PROVIDED OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACHIEVE

THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF TECHNICAL SKILL.

*Minn Vo-Tech schools The best!*  
The PRODUCT OF THIS SYSTEM -- OUR HIGHLY TRAINED AND DEDICATED  
WORKERS -- HAVE MADE MINNESOTA AN ATTRACTIVE STATE IN WHICH INDUSTRY

CAN LOCATE. It ALSO HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR OUR CITIZENS TO  
MAINTAIN ONE OF THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF LIVING IN OUR NATION.

THREE WORDS ARE HEARD OVER AND OVER AGAIN AT YOUR  
CONFERENCE.

THESE ARE THE WORDS SKILL -- COMPETITION -- LEADERSHIP <sup>L</sup>IT

CERTAINLY IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THESE THREE IMPORTANT WORDS ARE  
HEARD TOGETHER.

<sup>L</sup> WE ALL KNOW, BECAUSE WE HAVE SEEN IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN  
AMERICA, THAT COMPETITION -- IN THE ECONOMY, IN OUR SCHOOLS, IN  
THE POLITICAL SPHERE AND ELSEWHERE -- HAS SHARPENED SKILLS AND  
GIVEN LEADERSHIP AN OPPORTUNITY TO EMERGE.

<sup>L</sup> IT IS NO SECRET THAT COMPETITION IN OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM IS  
WHAT HAS KEPT <sup>us</sup> ~~IT~~ PRE-EMINENT IN WORLD COMMERCE. <sup>L</sup> ALL OF US,  
PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO REPRESENT YOU, MUST DO <sup>our</sup> ~~THEIR~~ UTMOST TO  
ASSURE THAT LIVELY COMPETITION CONTINUES IN AMERICA.

<sup>L</sup> YOUR EVENTS <sup>- your competition -</sup> THIS WEEKEND AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR CALL ON EACH  
OF YOU TO DO YOUR VERY BEST. <sup>L</sup> IT IS THIS DESIRE, THIS DETERMINATION,  
TO IMPROVE, TO DO BETTER, THAT HAS MADE OUR NATION GREAT.

L IT IS THIS ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK AND TOWARD CHALLENGES ~~IN~~  
~~OUR SOCIETY~~ THAT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STANDARD OF LIVING AND  
<sup>high</sup>  
QUALITY OF LIFE THAT WE SO UNIQUELY ENJOY IN MINNESOTA.

L BUT WE HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN AMERICA TODAY. -

*Inflation + Recession - unique.*

OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM IS NOT WORKING AS IT SHOULD. WITH

7.6 PERCENT OF THE LABOR FORCE "OFFICIALLY" UNEMPLOYED AND OVER

10 PERCENT "ACTUALLY" UNEMPLOYED, WE ARE WASTING SKILLS AND TALENT

AND PEOPLE AT A TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE RATE. <sup>L</sup> MOREOVER, WITH 20 TO

25 PERCENT OF OUR NATION'S INDUSTRIAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT STANDING

IDLE, WE ARE SQUANDERING OUR NATION'S VAST INDUSTRIAL RESOURCE.

L THE ~~SENT~~ RECESSION OF 1974 - 1975 WILL COST AMERICANS

WELL OVER ONE TRILLION DOLLARS IN INCOMES NOT EARNED AND GOODS

AND SERVICES NOT PRODUCED IN THIS DECADE.

THIS IS A TRAGIC AND COLOSSAL WASTE, A WASTE THAT WILL COST  
EVERY AMERICAN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

FOR AMERICA'S YOUNG PEOPLE THE SITUATION IS EVEN WORSE.

OUR NATION'S INABILITY TO PROVIDE TALENTED YOUNG AMERICANS WITH  
DECENT JOBS AT GOOD PAY BORDERS ON THE CRIMINAL *Shame.*

WHILE THE UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION HAS IMPROVED SLIGHTLY IN  
THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG OUR  
YOUNG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE LOOKING FOR A FULL TIME JOB  
WITH CAREER POTENTIAL FOR THE FIRST TIME, HAS NOT IMPROVED.

AS CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, I HAVE HELD  
A SERIES OF HEARINGS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON THIS MATTER IN  
THE PAST FEW MONTHS. HEARINGS IN CHICAGO, ATLANTA, BOSTON, NEW  
YORK, AND LOS ANGELES HAVE CONVINCED ME THAT WE SLOWLY ARE CHOKING  
OFF THE TALENT AND ENTHUSIASM OF YOUNG PEOPLE AT AN APPALLING RATE.

L TODAY IN AMERICA 1.8 MILLION YOUNG AMERICANS -- UNDER  
20 YEARS OF AGE -- ARE LOOKING FOR JOBS AND NOT FINDING THEM.

L HUGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN THEIR 20's ARE HAVING THE SAME PROBLEM.

OF COURSE, MANY YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE EITHER GIVEN UP LOOKING OR SIMPLY  
HAVE TAKEN JOBS THAT CALL FOR MUCH LESS TALENT AND DETERMINATION  
THAN THEY HAVE.

L TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT -- PARTICULARLY AMONG MINORITIES IN  
OUR INNER CITIES -- IS A CANCER EATING AWAY AT THE SOCIAL FABRIC  
OF AMERICA. L IT IS SOCIALLY DESTRUCTIVE, MORALLY DEGRADING,  
ECONOMICALLY WASTEFUL AND MUST BE POLITICALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

L IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, <sup>20</sup>~~19.9~~ PERCENT OF THOSE UNDER 20 YEARS  
OF AGE ACTIVELY SEEKING JOBS COULD FIND NONE. L HOWEVER, FOR BLACKS  
UNDER 20 YEARS OF AGE, UNEMPLOYMENT WAS 34.6 PERCENT AS WE STARTED  
THIS YEAR.

STUDENTS GRADUATING THIS JUNE -- AND THERE WILL BE ABOUT 1.5 MILLION COMING INTO THE JOB MARKET AT ALL LEVELS -- DO NOT FACE A BRIGHT FUTURE. THE NATIONAL RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT WILL STILL BE WELL OVER SEVEN PERCENT AND SEVEN MILLION PEOPLE.

OF COURSE, HERE IN MINNESOTA OUR ECONOMY IS SOMEWHAT HEALTHIER AND OUR UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, HOPEFULLY, WILL BE SOMEWHAT LESS. <sup>Students</sup> THEREFORE, THE CHANCES OF OUR GRADUATES GETTING JOBS WILL BE A LITTLE BETTER THAN IN MANY OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. BUT THEY WILL BE NOTHING LIKE THE KINDS OF OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE AND COULD HAVE IN A HEALTHY ECONOMY.

THE COMBINATION OF RECESSION LEVEL UNEMPLOYMENT AND DOUBLE-DIGIT INFLATION IN THE PAST TWO YEARS CLEARLY INDICATES THAT OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM ISN'T WORKING.

IT IS TIME FOR A THOROUGH RE-EXAMINATION OF OUR TRADITIONAL  
ECONOMIC THEORIES AND THE POLICIES THEY IMPLY. AND, SINCE THE  
PROBLEMS THAT YOU FACE TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE LARGELY WILL BE  
DEPENDENT ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, YOU AND ALL OTHER YOUNG AMERICANS  
HAVE THE GREATEST STAKE AND MUST FULLY PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCESS.

h TODAY MORE THAN EVER AMERICA NEEDS STRONG PROGRESSIVE  
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP. It needs leadership that will reverse  
the neglect and eliminate the waste that has cost <sup>so many</sup> ~~the~~ AMERICANS  
SO DEARLY. WE NEED PROGRESSIVE, COMPASSIONATE LEADERSHIP THAT  
CLEARLY SEES WHAT THE PROBLEMS ARE AND IS UNAFRAID TO ACT ON THEM.

IT IS TIME FOR THE TIMID AND THE NAY SAYERS TO STEP DOWN.  
AMERICANS DON'T NEED ~~the~~ CHEERLEADERS STANDING ON THE SIDELINES  
TELLING US WHAT WE CAN'T DO. WE NEED A STRONG AND FORCEFUL  
LEADER, SHOWING ALL AMERICANS WHAT WE CAN DO.

THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE IN AMERICA. WE HAVE ROADS TO BE  
BUILT AND IMPROVED, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES THAT ARE  
NEEDED, HOSPITALS AND SCHOOLS TO BE BUILT, REFORESTATION TO BE  
UNDERTAKEN, AND URBAN CENTERS THAT MUST BE REPAIRED AND REHABILITATED.

L THERE IS MUCH TO BE DONE IN AMERICA, AND MUCH THAT CAN BE  
DONE IF WE PUT AMERICA BACK TO WORK. I BELIEVE THAT EVERY AMERICAN  
WHO IS ABLE AND WILLING TO WORK SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO  
DO SO AT A DECENT WAGE. IF WE MAKE THIS POSSIBLE WE CAN MEET MOST  
OF OUR NEEDS AND USE ALL OF OUR ~~EXISTING~~ SKILLS.

L I WANT ABLE-BODIED PEOPLE ON THE JOB AND OFF WELFARE.

L I WANT PEOPLE WORKING IN PRIVATE JOBS TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT  
POSSIBLE. I WANT PEOPLE CONTRIBUTING TO AMERICA'S BOUNTY  
AND NOT SAPPING ITS ABUNDANCE.

~~LET ME REMIND YOU THAT EVERY ONE PERCENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT  
IN THE U.S. COSTS THE U.S. TREASURY AN ESTIMATED \$17 BILLION  
IN LOST TAX REVENUES AND INCREASED SPENDING FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.  
THIS RESULTS FROM A \$12 BILLION OR MORE DROP IN TAX REVENUES  
AND A \$5 BILLION INCREASE IN THE COST OF UNEMPLOYMENT  
COMPENSATION, FOOD STAMPS AND WELFARE. THE 8.5 PERCENT  
AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT IN 1975 ADDED ABOUT \$75 BILLION TO OUR  
NATION'S BUDGET DEFICIT -- JUST ABOUT THE ENTIRE AMOUNT!~~

\* \* \*

L LET ME CONCLUDE THESE REMARKS BY URGING YOU TO TAKE AN  
ACTIVE INTEREST IN YOUR POLITICAL SYSTEM. OUR FOUNDING  
FATHERS WERE IN MANY CASES NOT MUCH OLDER THAN YOU WHEN  
THEY DID THEIR MOST IMPORTANT DUTY FOR THEIR NATION.

✓ In 1776, THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS 33 YEARS OLD, JAMES MADISON WAS  
25, AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON WAS 21.

✓ At 22 YEARS OF AGE GEORGE WASHINGTON WAS A LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
AND A YEAR LATER WAS THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF ALL THE VIRGINIA  
MILITIA.

✓ WHEN ALEXANDER HAMILTON WAS 20 HE WAS AN IMPASSIONED AND  
EFFECTIVE PAMPHLETEER IN DEFENSE OF COLONIAL POLICIES. A YEAR LATER  
HE WAS A LIEUTENANT COLONEL ON GEORGE WASHINGTON'S PERSONAL STAFF.

✓ AS YOU LOOK TO YOUR FUTURES REMEMBER HOW YOUNG THESE MEN  
WERE WHEN THEY DID GREAT THINGS. ✓ YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HAVE A TREMENDOUS  
IMPACT ON THEIR SOCIETY, AND THEY SHOULD! AFTER ALL, THE POLITICAL  
DECISIONS OF TODAY WILL BUILD THE AMERICA IN WHICH YOU AND YOUR  
FAMILIES WILL HAVE TO LIVE IN THE YEARS TO COME.

*You can  
Vote -  
involved.*

L YOU SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT IT,

L THOSE WHO ARE YOUNG OUGHT TO HAVE A GREAT SENSE OF PURPOSE  
AND IDEALISM AS THEY STEP FORWARD TO EXPLORE THE FUTURE, AND

TRADITIONALLY IT HAS BEEN PART OF THE AMERICAN CHARACTER TO BE  
OPTIMISTIC -- TO HAVE FAITH AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE.

L OUR WHOLE HISTORY IS FILLED WITH ADVENTURE AND PIONEERING.

L AMERICANS THROUGH THE YEARS HAVE OPENED UP A CONTINENT, DEVELOPED

A NEW NATION. WE HAVE SHOWN THE WORLD NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN

in industry,  
AGRICULTURE, IN MEDICINE, IN EDUCATION AND TRANSPORTATION --

YES, IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE.

L YOU ARE IN THE VERY SPRING OF YOUR LIFE. L NOW IS THE TIME

FOR YOU TO QUESTION AND TO PROBE -- TO GAIN NEW UNDERSTANDING

AND TO LIVE EACH DAY TO ITS FULLEST.

I SENSE A NEW SPIRIT DAWNING IN AMERICA. I FIND  
IT WHEREVER I TRAVEL. IT IS A NEW SPIRIT AND IT IS THE  
SPIRIT BORN OF YOUR GENERATION.

A LONG NIGHTMARE OF CONFUSION AND DASHED HOPES FOR  
ALL TOO MANY AMERICANS IS GOING TO END, BECAUSE AT THE  
ROOT OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IS THE DETERMINATION NOT  
TO LOWER EXPECTATIONS, BUT TO ENGAGE IN BOLD EXPERIMENTS.

SO DO YOUR <sup>Best</sup> ~~THINGS~~, CONTINUE TO COMPETE, CONTINUE  
TO DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS, BUT DO NOT NEGLECT INVOLVEMENT IN  
THE POLITICS OF YOUR COUNTRY.

<sup>our</sup> ~~YOUR~~ POLITICAL SYSTEM CAN THRIVE ONLY IF YOU  
UNDERSTAND AND INVOLVE YOURSELVES IN THE DECISIONS AND  
THE JUDGMENTS AND THE NEW IDEAS OF THE DAY.

L IF THE IDEAS ARE GOOD, EMBRACE THEM. IF THEY'RE

BAD, REJECT THEM.

L YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF YOU BECOME INFORMED AND

INVOLVED. L As AMERICANS, YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE. !

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