

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY  
FUNDRAISER FOR REPRESENTATIVE NED PATTISON

Troy, New York

June 24, 1976

I'm glad to be able to talk with my good friends in Rensselaer County, and particularly such long-time Democrats as Ned Pattison and my old friend Ed McDonough, your county chairman, who has just been given a place on the Democratic National Committee.

Troy, New York has a well-earned reputation as the home town of Uncle Sam. He may not have been an ideal employer, in those early days of manufacturing, but he had one good idea which is still a good idea today. He knew that the prosperity of a community is only as great as the prosperity of each of its citizens -- and that to achieve that prosperity, people need jobs and they need a chance to earn a decent living.

There is an urgent need for us to hear that message again today.

Later on, when Uncle Sam had become a symbol, he used to stare down at us from those big posters in the Post Office or the Court House, his finger pointed straight ahead, saying "I want you."

Well, this year that finger is pointed at Ned Pattison.

And I am sure that Ned's distinguished colleagues from the Congress, Butler Derrick from South Carolina, Charles Wilson from Texas, and Tom Downey from down in Suffolk County, will join me in saying that Uncle Sam and his descendants have made a wise choice in choosing Ned Pattison as the man to get the job done.

I want to see Ned Pattison back in the Congress -- re-elected by a substantial margin.

Now, I know you have your problems. You have a huge Congressional district, nearly as large as the state of Connecticut. And you are up against an old, established Republican organization with its roots deep in the past.

And I know that former Governor Rockefeller made a lot of friends for himself and the Republican party, what with all the construction work he brought to the area. On the other hand, I've heard it said that there is so much marble in that South Mall project that people who work there are legally required to vote in Vermont.

But I know something else, too. This district, in 1974, elected the first Democratic representative in more than 100 years. And in Rensselaer County, the Democrats brought in an amazing 62 percent of the vote. That is a record to be proud of, and a candidate to be proud of.

And I'm expecting you to make the same kind of effort this year. You can't ask for a more crucial time to do so, and you can't ask for a better candidate to do it with.

Ned's record is a classic study in representative government. He went from town chairman, to county executive committee, to county treasurer, to Congress. He didn't just ride in on a white horse and pick up the election. He worked for it from office to office for more than fifteen years of service to the people of this district and the Democratic party.

And when he decided to run, he took on a long-time incumbent in a district that had been Republican since anybody could remember.

Since then, he has distinguished himself in the Congress as a sensible and progressive legislator. He has done valuable work on the House Judiciary Committee. He has been a consistent and vocal advocate of holding the line on defense spending -- and in so doing, holding the line on our tax bills.

And he has done his job well as your representative -- from constant attention to his constituents, to the creation of a new mobile office for the district.

The way I see it, that's the record of a first-class Congressman and a winning candidate. And Ned Pattison is both of those -- and will continue to be, if we in the Party do our jobs.

This year it is more important than ever that we put practical, active leaders to work for the nation. Times have changed.

And the Congress is changing with the times. It is attracting working legislators like Ned Pattison -- men and women with a vision of the future of this country and the guts to get the job done.

Never before in this century have we had better, more compelling, more obvious reasons to elect such leaders.

But on the chance that someone in America needs to be reminded of the particulars, let me restate the people's indictment of Republican government.

Seven sad years of the Nixon-Ford team have been more than enough.

-- The Nixon-Ford team has laid waste to the American economy with its 19th century economic thinking.

-- The Nixon-Ford team has undermined confidence in government, bringing it to its lowest point in decades. And I'm not just talking about forced resignations of a President and Vice President. More to the point, I'm talking about the widespread belief among our people that this government isn't functioning, isn't responding to their concerns, isn't doing anything until it is hit by one crisis or another.

-- The only creativity we have seen from the White House has been its ability to say no in 92 different ways -- 92 vetoes against the expressed will of the American people.

It is time to take off the gloves and tell it like it is.

The party that has occupied the White House for the last seven years is a minority party -- and for good reason. It has clearly demonstrated that it is incapable of running the country in the interest of all its people. It has succeeded only in running it into the ground.

As we look back on the seven sad years of Republican control of the White House, it is time to demand an accounting. All we are getting is empty rhetoric -- another "cover-up" for disastrous Republican performance.

Let's take a quick look at what it has meant to have Republicans in charge.

From 1961 to 1969, when the Democratic Party was in the White House, we created 13 million new jobs. We reduced unemployment to 3.6 percent in 1968.

In the last three years, the Nixon-Ford team has been able to increase employment by barely one million jobs. They managed to push the official unemployment rate to an 8.5 percent average in 1975, and the real unemployment rate remains today at a double-digit level in a number of major cities.

Since 1972 the Republicans have provided no more than one job for every four new job seekers in our country.

Only one job for every four persons! What an indictment of "go slow" Republican economics!

In the Democratic 60's, with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson in the White House, the weekly take-home pay of a working man or woman, after inflation, rose by 12.4 percent.

In the past three years alone that same man or woman has experienced a drop of 5.4 percent in the real value of their take-home pay. Republican economic mismanagement has, in fact, pushed the working families of America back 10 years to their 1965 income level.

In the 60's when Democrats were attempting to make important social and economic changes in our nation in order to improve life for all our citizens, the rate of inflation was a mere 2.3 percent.

In the last several years the Republicans have given us not only high unemployment but the highest levels of inflation since World War II. It takes more than WIN buttons and anti-government slogans to keep prices from going through the roof.

The income, production and employment loss to America as a result of Republican bungling of national economic management since 1969 is staggering:

-- Two Republican recessions have thrown 57 million Americans out of work and into the street at one time or another.

-- Two Republican recessions have robbed one trillion dollars from the paychecks of American workers.

-- Two Republican recessions have wiped out the entire income gain made by working families of America during the decade of the 60's.

Even more alarming is the fact that Republican "go slow" policies are convincing many of our citizens that a welfare check is as good as a paycheck. We have an entire generation of young men and women who never have held a full time job.

The policies of these modern day free market buccaneers have torn the fabric of our society in other ways, too.

The Republicans promised to get crime off the streets, but since 1969 the crime rate has risen 30 percent. The number of murders has leaped 50 percent. The number of robberies has risen 68 percent. The number of burglaries has soared 84 percent.

Your family has a one in six chance of being victimized by a burglary or theft this year. That's how Republicans deliver on their promises.

Today President Ford and his economic advisers travel around the country with their economic medicine show.

Once again, the Republicans are claiming an "economic miracle" in an election year. There is, indeed, a modest recovery underway but I see few signs that a true "people's recovery" has taken hold.

Let me just remind you of two facts. First, when you are flat on your back the only way to go is up.

Second, the American people should remember that it was a Democratic Congress that argued and prodded the Republican President and his Wall Street advisors to take every reluctant step that has produced the economic improvements to date.

Let's not forget that in December of 1974, while the worst recession since the Great Depression took an every-firmer stranglehold on the American economy, Gerald Ford was calling for a tax increase! And remember that at that time the only Administration response was the WIN button and a smile.

But we won't win this election by default.

Democrats will only win if they go to the country with a positive message and convince our citizens that we have a better idea and will do a better job. And we cannot do so as prophets of gloom and doom.

We can work to eliminate inefficiency in government, and Congress has made great strides in that area. Ned Pattison has been a leader in that effort.

But our principal concern should always be whether and how the interests of people best can be served.

The answer is better government -- a government that works to serve the nation's needs.

Democrats should run against Republicans. They should run against the Republicans that gave us Watergate, double-digit inflation, and depression-level unemployment. They should run against the Washington of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford and William Simon. But not against the Washington of FDR and JFK and LBJ -- the Washington of Social Security and Medicare, and the other vital services our people are demanding.

The issue of this election year is not Washington -- but the disastrous policies of the Nixon-Ford Administration -- vetoes, unemployment, recession, inflation, crime, corruption and the neglect of our nation's cities.

Let us get on with the work of running against the Republicans and their economic policies which have brought us to the brink of depression.

Only in this way will we regain the faith and confidence of the American people.

We will win by putting leaders like Ned Pattison to work for all of us.

We will win because we care.

We will win because we dare to pioneer.

Working together, you and I will win because our people have learned the painful lesson of Republican government. They know that only a Democratic victory in November can wipe out the losses of the last seven years and bring their families a better day -- with decency, opportunity and prosperity once again.

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