

*Senator may want to use
but not ready to use now.*

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE - FARMERS - CONSUMER COALITION

Mondale urges Coalition of Farmers and Consumers

Senator Walter F. Mondale (D.-Minn.) urged farmers and consumers to join forces in building a strong coalition to bring about needed changes in the government farm program.

"Farmers and consumers should not allow anyone to polarize them into hostile camps," the Minnesota Senator told _____. "Family farmers, consumers, workers and conservationists must join together to hold their own against increasing corporate power," Mondale warned.

The Senator pointed to recent beef price activity as an example of where neither the farmer nor the consumer has been treated fairly.

"Since July, cattle prices to farmers have continually dropped," he said, "but retail meat prices have not. In fact, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture figures, the farm-to-retail price spread on beef is now at an historic high. It is very disturbing this could happen during Phase II price controls".

Mondale urges Coalition of Farmers and Consumers - continued

"When beef prices started increasing last spring, Secretary of Agriculture, Butz delighted in turning consumers against farmers with great fanfare. But at the same time the Department of Agriculture was building a cozier relationship with a handful of private companies, juggling import and export quotas.

"The handling of the Soviet grain sales, activities of the crop reporting services and land grant college research all smack of increaslingly closer ties between USDA and a few large private interests," Mondale continued. "While corporate interests gain favors from the USDA, family farmers and consumers only get a lot of talk".

"Stability must be restored to American agriculture," he concluded. "That's the reason we have a government farm program --to assure farmers a fair and consistent income and to assure consumers of stable supplies of food and fiber. We all must work together toward legislation to accomplish that".

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MONDALE FUND RAISER
10/14/72
Minneapolis, Mn.

I am deeply grateful to each of you for being here tonight.

Time and time again, you have given me your help... support...friendship...and trust when I have needed it.

I know that you are here because you believe...as I do...that the stakes in this election are crucial.

It has become a common cliché in American politics that there is not much difference in the candidates of the two political parties...or the parties themselves.

But I think there are some critical differences... differences that are clearer today than ever before.

Both parties know what's happening in this country:

.They know there are millions of people -- including Vietnam veterans -- who desperately want jobs and can't find them.

.They know that every worker's paycheck and every widow's pension is eaten up by a cruel inflation.

.They know that small farmers throughout this country barely manage to survive from one year to the next.

.They know that there are too many loopholes in our tax system...and that the average wage-earner pays more than his fair share of taxes.

.And they know that there are far too many Americans living in poverty and despair in this land of unprecedented prosperity.

The critical difference, however, is what our leaders do with this knowledge.

Tragically, this Administration...both at home and abroad...has been guilty of what the poet Archibald MacLeish called "the divorce between knowing and feeling."

What distinguishes Hubert Humphrey...and George McGovern...and Ted Kennedy...is that they are men who feel the reality in America...and who act on feeling as well as knowledge.

That is the real spirit and meaning of the Democratic Party.

The Democratic Party is Hubert Humphrey standing alone in 1948...telling Americanthat we could no longer ignore basic human rights.

The Democratic Party is Ted Kennedy fighting against human suffering wherever he finds it...fighting for the children of Harlem as well as Biafra...Appalachia as well as Bangladesh.

And the Democratic Party is George McGovern...who throughout his career has defended the interests of the small farmer and the worker...who had the courage and foresight to recognize the folly of the tragic war in Indochina long before most of us...and who Bob Kennedy called "the most decent man in the United States Senate."

These men...and our Party...understand that the strength of America lies as much in the force of our compassion and ideals...as in the force of our arms.

And they understand the essential decency, compassion, and good will of the American people.

As one writer put it, "the strength of America is not in the Presidency but in the people. A President," he continued

"who brought out the best qualities of the American people rather than manipulated their anxieties and exploited their divisions would find himself leader of a nation that was mighty because it was a nation renewed."

That's why we need a new President...and that's why we need George McGovern.

We can make government decent again -- make it strong in its integrity, and guided by feeling and compassion. Bob Kennedy talked about what our future could be when he spoke minutes after the news of Martin Luther King's murder.

"What we need in the United States is not division... not hatred...not violence or lawlessness...but love and wisdom and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our country.

"Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world. Let us dedicate ourselves to that, and say a prayer for our country and for our people."

OPENING DEBATE STATEMENT

I would like to thank WCCO Radio for sponsoring this question and answer program.

For eight years, Minnesotans have permitted me to serve them in the United States Senate.

I have tried to be a People's Senator...and I am proud of the broad support I have received from working people and their families, unions, farmers, businessmen, educators... and from many other groups throughout our state.

I have worked hard for decent social security and pension reform to help our senior citizens enjoy a secure and dignified retirement...for programs to help our children share in the fullness of American life...and for safer cars, wholesome meat, and other important measures to protect the average consumer.

I have fought against waste in government and against inequities in our tax system.

And I am proud of my role in establishing the Voyageurs National Park, saving the magnificent St. Croix River, and preserving our priceless fresh water community lakes.

I have made my share of mistakes...and I have had my frustrations.

But I have always done my best to represent the people of Minnesota.

I welcome this chance to discuss my record and my views on major issues.

DEBATE CLOSING STATEMENT

Our country stands at a cross roads. At every turn, we are faced with great unfinished national tasks.

If we can end the tragic war in Indochina...if we can stop wasting limited funds on useless and unjustifiable programs...we can then move on to solving the urgent human problems facing our country.

We have made progress. But I still find throughout our state a desperate need for jobs,,for an end to inflation, for decent farm income, for a fair and equitable tax structure, for quality education, for consumer justice, for less expensive health care, for better retirement programs, for an all-out effort to preserve our environment, and for other human services.

I believe the people of this country are ready to meet these needs and to make another great turning for America... a turning from a brutal war to a humane peace...a turning from neglect and despair to commitment and hope.

I am seeking re-election to the U.S. Senate because I want to be a part of that effort -- and because I want to continue serving the people of Minnesota.

PRESS RELEASE
VETERANS

Senator Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn) today hailed enactment of land-mark legislation that will extend VA health care benefits to 650,000 veterans, their dependents and survivors.

Speaking at Veterans Day observances at the Minneapolis Veterans Administration Hospital, Mondale paid tribute to "the courage and sacrifice of millions of our veterans who have served to keep the American spirit strong and free."

"America has a commitment to the men who serve us all by serving their country," Mondale said. "It's a commitment that we as a nation have always been willing and honored to meet."

Mondale praised the Veterans Health Care Expansion Act, which he co-sponsored, for helping to "close the terrible gap in medical care that has plagued veterans and their families." The Act will open VA medical facilities to more than 430,000 veterans and dependents who were not previously eligible, and will extend out-patient care to an additional 204,000 veterans with service-connected disabilities. The bill also doubles the number of nursing home beds, provides for improved staff-patient ratios in VA hospitals and better programs to attract and retain both specialists and paramedical personnel.

"Within three years," Mondale emphasized, "the VA medical care system will receive the funding it needs to rank with the best available in the United States."

"The Veterans Health Care Expansion Act is a sound investment in the health and well-being of millions of Americans," Mondale said. "And it is also an expression of the compassion and humanity which distinguish the true spirit of America and make our country great."

VETERANS DAY
Minneapolis, Minn.
10/23/72

I am honored to be with you here today as...together...
we mark perhaps the most meaningful of all American observances.

Veterans Day is an outgrowth of war...and yet we are
not assembled here to consecrate the memory of past conflicts.

No one detests war more than those who have experienced
its torment first-hand. None strive more vigorously for peace
than those who have tasted the brutality of armed struggle.

This is...uniquely...a national holiday that is not
really a holiday. Veterans Day has always been and will
always remain a day of solemnity...a day on which we reflect
on the past injustices of man to man...and pray that the future
will no longer require the ultimate sacrifice of any American
fighting man.

On this day, no veteran thinks of himself as a hero.
Each of you...all of you...have all the faults and virtues,
all the strengths and weaknesses, of humanity itself.

Yet who is so cynical as to ridicule the act of military service in time of war?

Who can deny that those who carried the awful weight of battle performed the highest service of American citizenship?

Never was this more true than for the brave young men who are returning from one of the most brutal wars in our history.

These young men must not be sacrificed on the altar of national division over this war.

The Vietnam vet...like the World War I...the World War II...and the Korean vet before him...must be honored for the service he has performed.

No matter what our feelings about this war, we must not vent our frustrations on the men who have served in it.

No matter how much we want that war to end...we must go out of our way to make the returning Vietnam vet feel that he is honored in this country.

This is the spirit of Veterans Day.

When President Eisenhower proclaimed Veterans Day in 1954, he called it an occasion for honoring our veterans of all wars.

This group now numbers more than 38 million. 27 million are still living. Together, living veterans and their families... and the living dependents of deceased veterans...constitute about one-half the present United States population.

I don't believe you can find any other single day that honors so many for a job well done.

This is one reason why Veterans Day is special. But there is another.

Veterans Day has a great lesson for all of us. It teaches us that ordinary Americans...the everyday people with whom we live and work...are capable of greatness when great demands are made upon them.

And great demands have always been made on American servicemen...at the Somme...on the Normandy Beaches...and at Iwo Jima. At Inchon and the Yalu River...at Hue and in the Mekong Delta.

Americans died there...and on hundreds of other battlefields...for a principle they believed in. It is no small sacrifice for a man in the loneliness of battle to give up his life for a principle. Yet thousands upon thousands of Americans have done just that.

And many times that number have placed their lives in the same jeopardy for the same cause.

Many escaped physical harm. But many will bear the scar of conflict all their lives.

We cannot let these men down.

When veterans turn to their government for medical care, they're not seeking special treatment. They're seeking what all Americans want -- a chance to live productive and rewarding lives...to enjoy self-respect...and the respect of their communities.

They deserve that chance. America has a commitment to the men who serve us all by serving their country. It's a commitment that we as a nation have always been willing-- and honored -- to meet.

And if that commitment is not met, it will not be because the American people have forgotten the debt we owe our veterans...or because the crisis in veterans' care can't be solved.

It will be because our government has grown tragically blind to the needs...and deaf to the voices...of our people.

We have faced this crisis before.

Just after World War II, a story went around about a man with a pain in his side who made an appointment to see the doctor.

When he got to the doctor's office, he found no doctor...only an empty waiting room with two doors. One of them was marked left side...and the other was marked right side.

Since the pain was in his left side, he went through the door marked left. Again he found himself in a room with two doors, this time marked Upper Half of the Body and Lower Half of the Body. The pain was located just above his waist... so he went through the door marked Upper Half.

This process continued for some time...more rooms... more doors...until at last he found himself in a room facing two doors -- one marked Sudden and the other marked Chronic.

The pain had been bothering him for some time.. So he went through the door marked chronic -- and found himself out on the street.

Even today, that story hits uncomfortably close to home.

We met the challenge of World War II...and I know we can meet the challenge facing us today.

The challenge, however, is difficult. And let's be frank. We are facing a crisis in veterans' medical care today.

There are now 167 hospitals and 202 clinics in the Veterans Administration system. These facilities have been trying valiantly to provide quality care for our nation's veterans.

But no matter how dedicated the staff...or how committed the administrators of these facilities...they simply cannot be operated as they should be without sufficient funds.

Over the past five years an overwhelming majority in the Congress...Democrats and Republicans alike...have recognized this essential fact and voted to increase funding. As a result the Veterans Administration medical budget has nearly doubled...rising from \$1.36 billion to \$2.6 billion.

Yet despite this increase, we still face serious problems.

We must do a better job of meeting the very special needs of our newest veterans...the veterans who have come home from Vietnam.

Modern technology has made Vietnam a unique...and cruel...and crippling war.

Better helicopter service in the field...and better field hospital care -- both of them made possible by the indescribable dedication and courage of thousands of unknown heroes -- have saved the lives of many severely wounded men who would have died in any other war.

The survival rate among our severely wounded is 10% higher in Vietnam than in any earlier war.

But meeting the very special needs of our Vietnam veterans is only one part of the problem we face.

Our staff levels in VA hospitals are lower than the staff levels in other hospital facilities.

In community hospitals nationwide, there are 2.7 staff personnel for every patient. In many university or teaching hospitals, the ratio may be as high as three or four to one.

Yet right here... in this VA hospital...the ratio of staff to patients is about 2 to 1. By VA standards, that's pretty good. In the Fargo hospital -- which serves many Minnesotans -- the ratio is only one and a half to one. In the St. Cloud Hospital, it is less than one to one.

There is no reason why our veterans should have fewer staff personnel to care for them in VA hospitals than other Americans have in other hospital facilities.

There's no reason -- except lack of funds.

For despite our effort to allocate more money for veterans' care, our VA hospitals still face a desperate need for additional funds.

With more adequate funding, we could --

--open up VA services to hundreds of thousands of veterans and their dependents who are currently ineligible for VA hospital care;

--extend out-patient care to many other veterans who cannot now use these services;

--improve training programs and pay incentives to attract and retain highly trained specialists.

We are moving much closer to these goals.

The Veterans Health Care Expansion Act of 1972 ^{is about to} ~~has now~~ become law. I was proud to be a co-sponsor in the Senate of this vital legislation...which will greatly improve the quality of medical care for America's veterans.

Under the terms of this act, we will --

--open VA hospital and out-patient facilities to 432,000 veterans, their wives and children, who were never before eligible for treatment;

--extend outpatient care to 204,000 veterans with service-connected disabilities who cannot now receive it, and this care would cover any injury or illness;

--require the VA within three years to raise the staff to patient ratio in every VA facility to a level comparable to other medical facilities in the community;

--help the VA in a campaign to seek out all returning servicemen and recent vets who served as military medics and corpsmen...to use their skills as VA physicians' and dentists' assistants;

--improve training programs as well as continuing education programs to attract and retain personnel with "scarce medical skills";

--require VA hospitals to admit enough patients to maintain a daily average of 85,500 beds and double the statutory minimum of VA nursing home beds to a total of 8,000 by 1974.

There's more to this landmark legislation.

Taken as a whole, the Veterans Hospital Care Act promises to make VA medical services more effective and to expand the reach of the VA system.

The expansion of services to veterans not previously covered is particularly important.

We know too well the terrible hardship that hospital expense can mean.

I received an eloquent and courageous letter recently, from an elderly woman facing the grim prospect of hospital bills...and no way of paying them. It read in part:

"My husband is going in for surgery this week and I dread the hospital bill...I'm sure you know what hospitals cost and on a fixed income and retired 13 years, I'm afraid it turns out to be a bit of a problem."

With passage of the Veterans Health Care Act, 150,000 peace-time veterans will no longer face the costs of hospitalization...in a mood of quiet desperation.

These veterans...who served before World War I...or between World Wars I and II...or between the Second World War and Korea...will now be able to use VA facilities. If they have non-service-connected disabilities and are not able to afford private care, they will now be eligible to use the entire VA system...including hospital, nursing home and out-patient care.

In addition, 282,000 women and children not covered by Medicare, Medicaid or Military Medical Benefits will become eligible for VA medical care. The wives and orphans of vets who died from service-connected disabilities will also have the entire VA system of medical services at their disposal.

This legislation will help close the terrible gap in medical care that has plagued veterans and their families.

But as these newly eligible people come into the VA system, we must have a system truly capable of caring for them.

For that reason, the bill's provision for upgrading staff-to-patient ratios becomes crucial.

Within three years, every VA facility should have the same staff ratio as those in other medical facilities in the surrounding community. VA medical care will rank with the finest this country can offer. And veterans in VA hospitals will no longer be second-class citizens.

The Veterans' Health Care Expansion Act is an investment in the health...and well-being of millions of Americans.

It is also an expression of the compassion...and humanity...which distinguish the true spirit of America...and make our country great.

On this day we honor the courage and sacrifice of millions of our veterans who have served to keep the American spirit strong and free.

And we rededicate ourselves to what the poet Archibald MacLeish called "the American Proposition --

the peculiar attitude of the American people which is based on being respectful of the humanity in yourself and therefore the humanity in all men."



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