

From the Mayor's Office
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Mayor Hubert H. Humphrey speaking before the annual convention of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor called upon "the leadership and the rank and file membership of the trade unions of Minnesota to enter into political action on an all-out scale."

Humphrey said, "Elections in Minnesota cannot be won if the spirit that motivates the organization is just one of getting even or of punishing the supporters of the Taft-Hartley Bill. Yes, the Taft-Hartley Bill is punitive legislation. It is rank anti-labor legislation. It was prepared and authored by the historic enemies of organized labor. It is all of these things. Labor has every reason to be angry but anger never won an election.

"The people of Minnesota are looking for political leadership that has a constructive program which meets the needs and wants of all sections of our population. The people of this state want neither the extremism of the radical 'left' nor the reaction and do-nothingism of the high-bound and hard-shelled 'right'.

"We need to have leadership today that thinks straight on every issue not just the trade union issue. We need to understand the interdependence of our economy and the importance of an over-all program that makes sense to the farmer, that appeals to the small businessman and that gives recognition to the serious economic problems which confront the white collar worker.

"Americans are concerned over many problems. We want a foreign policy that can be understood by the man on the street. We want to be sure that our efforts in international rehabilitation are directed by men who believe in democracy and who sense the importance of building democratic institutions in Europe and Asia.

"Our people are justly concerned over the startling rise in prices and the dwindling of the value of the dollar. A political program which has practical meaning to the housewife, the wage earner, the businessman and the farmer must be bold and courageous in its all-out effort to check the rise in the cost of living.

"We must be ever mindful of the importance of supporting the cooperative movement and fighting for the extension and strengthening of cooperative enterprise. We must seek not only to support the federal program of rural electrification but we should ask for state assistance in the development of REA cooperatives.

"The labor movement must give its unqualified support to such national efforts as the extension of soil conservation and soil erosion control, the development of regional river valley authorities, the extension of agricultural research, the conservation of our natural resources, the enlargement of the social security program, and the fostering of broad national economic planning.

"Let no group make the fatal mistake of thinking that it can remove injustices committed against it by dealing unfairly with others. Do not be guilty of the fatal mistake of labor setting itself apart from the rest of the community and thinking that its battle for economic justice can be won by its own efforts. Labor has a big stake in politics. Politics in America includes all of the people--successful political action requires that labor join in with the rest of the progressive elements who are desirous

of helping the just cause of labor while at the same time equally determined to have their government undertake constructive programs for the betterment of the entire community.

"The task that labor has today is to gain the confidence and the respect of its friends on the farms and neighbors and fellow citizens along Main Street. This requires extensive information and education which comes not only in the union hall but also in the smaller cities and rural areas.

"I urge the State Federation of Labor to take a positive stand on all issues. Endorse candidates. Join with other people and groups for democratic political action. Get into the political party. It is there where programs are written and policies conceived. To stand on the outside permitting a 'clique' of 'Die-hards' or 'red-hots' to control and run the party is to invite defeat.

"Minnesota is a progressive state. Our people have given inspiring leadership in labor, cooperatives, and farm organizations. We must dedicate our efforts to a restoration of progressive politics. If we fail, it is the fault of no one but ourselves."



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