PITTSBURGH, PA., March 9 -- Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minn.) tonight dubbed the leaders of the ultra-right wing as "silver-plated Knights of Noisy Negativism."

The Senate Majority Whip challenged right-wing leaders to present "some positive, constructive proposals for a change."

Humphrey addressed a Roosevelt Day dinner of the Pittsburgh Americans for Democratic Action.

"Though the armor of the Knights of Negativism shines brightly," he said, "I suspect it is like one of those old suits of armor seen in museums or found in attics: Quite rusty at the joints from lack of movement.

"And I have an even stronger suspicion that if we lifted the face hood of that suit of armor and pointed a flashlight through the dust, we would find inside exactly nothing -- except perhaps a few mouldy echoes from the past."

"The Rightist Knights of Negativism are against everything," Humphrey said. "They seek to destroy programs now proven and successful. They seek to tear down, to destroy, to negate.

"And they suggest nothing positive or constructive to replace all they would obliterate with their slogans and 19th Century cliches."

Humphrey said that the "spears of the Knights of Negativism have been blunted by the solid wall of achievement of liberal programs and progressive policies."

He scoffed at "rightist boasts that a conservative tide is dominating the country," and added:

"Noisy rallies and frequent headlines do not truly reflect the mood of the American people.

"One clue to that mood is the record of the New Frontier
Administration in Congress. The First Session of the 87th Congress passed more solid, liberal legislation than any session since the 1930's.

"This is a liberal era for America," Humphrey concluded. "If anyone wants to see a Conservative tide, he will have to lean low. For it will be little more than a trickle of tears from the Knights of Negativism who will witness continuing, positive achievements and progress in the United States."
EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
ROOSEVELT DAY DINNER
AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION

Pittsburgh, Pa.
March 9, 1962
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I am honored to be with you tonight.

I am proud of the record of Americans for Democratic Action, and of my association with this organization.

And let me add that I am not afraid that this big, surging wave of conservatism we read so much about will crush me if I express my respect for the ADA publicly.

Just yesterday, in Washington, a reporter for the Associated Press called
my office to explain that he was writing
a story on ADA and wanted a quote from
Humphrey.

I suspect that the reporter
expected a timid, fence-straddling
statement from the Assistant Majority
Leader of the United States Senate. He
did not get it. This is what I told him:

"The Americans for Democratic Action
has a constructive influence on the
general community and on the government.
Its principle role is political education.
It performs that function conscientiously, effectively,
and responsibly. The mission of the ADA
is to promote progressive democracy, and
at the same time to expose the political hypocrisy of the radical left. At the same time to expose the political hypocrisy of the radical left.

I hope every news media in the Nation uses that A.P. story, and my quote with it. This has been a busy week for me. On Wednesday night, I was in New York to deliver two addresses. I sort of hoped that a third meeting in New York -- of the Young Americans for Freedom -- would find a spot for me to speak between Senator Goldwater and Senator Tower of Texas.

But they didn't invite me. I suppose there was not enough time on the program. This could, perhaps, be explained by two
paragraphs in a New York Times report on their meeting the next day. I quote from the Times' story:

"The Young Americans had organized a meticulous timetable. This allowed, among other things, for a three minute 'demonstration' for Senator Tower and a ten minute 'demonstration' for Senator Goldwater on their introductions.

"A 'second demonstration' for Senator Goldwater after his speech was scheduled for four minutes. A spokesman said the scheduling aimed to fit into the radio time response—Shades of Moscow."

I have just one comment: I would rather
receive two-seconds of applause from a
natural and uncontrolled ADA audience than
two hours of a planned "demonstration" from
a Rally of the Right.

I think it is obvious by now that the
leaders of the radical right present
themselves as knights in shining armor, emotionally,
eager to save the American people from the
dragons of progress and liberal achievement.

I am willing to admit that they are
knights. I dub them: Knights of Noisy
Negativism.

And they are, indeed, suited in
shining armor. Their armor shines...
it is silver-plated and well-heeled. It is polished to a high gloss with liberal doses of oil from Texas and Southern California.

Though the armor of the Knights of Negativism shines brightly, I suspect it is like one of those old suits of armor seen in museums or found in attics: quite rusty at the joints from lack of movement.

And I have an even stronger suspicion that if one of us lifted the face hood of that armor and pointed a flashlight through the mail, we would find inside exactly nothing -- except perhaps a few mouldy
The Rightist Knights of Negativism carry heavy spears for their attacks. They are against everything. They seek to destroy programs now proven and successful. They seek to tear down, to destroy, to negate. And they suggest nothing positive or constructive. They chant: replace all they would obliterate with their slogans and 19th Century cliches.

But if you look closely, you will notice that the spears of the right wingers are blunt. Indeed, they are worn almost to the handle. They have been blunted and worn down by the solid
wall of achievement of liberal programs and progressive policies. The Rightist Knights of Negativism speak jubilantly about a "conservative tide of the future." They gleefully boast that a majority of Americans are turning away from liberal traditions and policies. They claim that conservatism is becoming the dominant factor in American thought and policy.

Nonsense. I disagree, and not because I am a dedicated liberal.

It is true that conservative groups are making noise and getting headlines — but noise and headlines do not reflect the mood of the country.
and right-wing organizations have been making more noise in recent months. It is true that they have captured more news headlines during the past year.

But noise and headlines do not truly reflect the mood of the country. A better measure of the mood is the action of Congress. A brief look at the First Session of the 87th Congress last year is enough to negate all the boasts about a "conservative tide."

The liberal policies and programs of Pres. Kennedy and the New Frontier were given solid backing in the public and in Congress — sometimes by overwhelming majorities.
The Congress approved the Area Redevelopment Act, to help economically distressed areas of the country back to health.

We boosted the minimum wage standard to $1.25 an hour and extended coverage under this law to an additional 3.6 million workers.

We approved the Housing Act to give the country the most progressive and sweeping housing program in its history.

We added a new, liberal dimension to our foreign aid program with the "Alliance
for Progress" in Latin America to encourage economic, social and political reform. And we launched two liberal programs for which I had worked for years: The United States Peace Corps, and the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. All of these are facts, not boasts. They are achievements, not claims. They are practical steps forward, not pleas to move backward.

The job is not finished. The First Session of the 87th Congress produced more
substantial, liberal legislation than in any year since the early thirties, but much remains to be done.

Much will be done in this Second Session of the 87th Congress.

But, Liberals in the Senate and the House of Representatives do not fool themselves about the efforts needed for a record of achievement. We are well aware of the strength of conservative forces in Congress.

We know that we face some hard fights and some long battles to enact the programs we believe are necessary to keep the Nation moving forward.
But we are confident, the number of liberals in the Congress has increased substantially in recent years. And they have learned to work together -- and to work more effectively -- for the policies and programs in which they believe.

With the leadership and support of President Kennedy, we have embarked on a new decade of progress and achievement. I have no doubt that the record of success in the First Session of the 87th Congress will be continued this year.

Let me use as an example the program of medical care for elderly citizens under
the Social Security system.

A tremendous propaganda offensive has been conducted against it. Vast sums of money have been spent in an effort to convince the public that the Administration's medical care plan is a form of "socialized medicine."

The facts tell another story.

It is a fact that millions of elderly Americans today face frequent health problems -- at a time when their incomes are reduced.

It is a fact that millions of elderly Americans cannot afford the high premiums
of private medical care plans, and that the private plans at best provide limited coverage.

It is a fact that the program advanced by the Administration and liberal Congressional leaders includes a guarantee and emphasis that patients under the program would have free choice of doctor and hospital.

It is a fact that the medical care program under Social Security would be soundly-financed.

Under the Administration program, a citizen would pay into a fund for medical insurance over a lifetime of earnings --
instead of facing staggering hospital and medical costs at an advanced age when he is least able to pay.

This liberal program would be an example of "government with a heart" and it would be fiscally sound. It would not require any form of a humiliating "means test" or declaration of need.

We face a stiff fight to establish this program, but I predict it will be approved. The American people -- young and old -- want it. The President has given it high priority. And the liberal
leaders of Congress will push hard for its enactment.

Medical Care for the Elderly under the Social Security system is just one of many goals of the liberal New Frontier.

They will be reached soon -- no matter how many rallies the Knights of Negativism organize and no matter how much noise the Radical Rightists make.

This is a liberal year, a liberal decade, a liberal era for America. If anyone wants to see the Conservative tide, he will have to lean low. for it will be little more than a trickle of tears from
the Knights of Negativism who see continuing, positive achievements in the
United States.

The liberal of today does see one
tide -- the tide of change. It is sweeping
the world. The liberal knows that the
millions of people who have suffered
hunger, poverty and social injustice all
of their lives are not willing to wait
for promises of gradual change. He knows
that unless the United States attempts to
help and guide this revolution for change,
that could be crushed by it.

That is why our Nation must do
everything possible to encourage social and political reform, in the struggling nations and areas of the world. We must help the growth of the trade union movement, the development of cooperatives and progressive policies by business and government leaders of every nation.

Conservative policies will not work in an era of rapid change and demands for progress by the people. Human beings who suffer poverty, injustice, illiteracy and hunger are no longer patient to "conserve" the old conditions of the past.

Above all, we need to develop effective
plans for both domestic and international programs. Liberals believe in planning. They are impatient with those who say that planning is "good practice" for business" but "socialism" in government.

Liberals in the Congress, in the Democratic Party, in our communities, in organizations such as ADA must work together for their common goal -- a Nation and world of continuing progress, of justice for all men, of secure peace and freedom.