

RADIO ADDRESS BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF  
MINNEAPOLIS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY OVER WLWL TUESDAY, MAY 29,  
1945, 8:15 P.M.

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At the outset of my broadcast tonight I wish to acknowledge the many hundreds of letters and messages that I have been receiving from the many voters who wish to express their support of the program that I have been presenting.

These messages are deeply gratifying. They demonstrate a genuine interest in the real problems that confront our community. They are convincing proof that the thoughtful people of Minneapolis favor a positive program aimed at revitalizing our city government.

I cannot begin to tell you how reassuring it is to know that the program I have been outlining has touched off so spontaneous and sincere a response among so many citizens.

Your letters intensify my determination to do everything in my power as mayor to make certain that our city shall begin on the long road back to civic progress.

I feel that your messages have caught the full spirit of a campaign that we have attempted to keep educational and informative -- a campaign that provides a high level of discussion of the important issues of the day.

In the course of this campaign I have been attempting to present to you a program of action -- a program based upon the need of vigorous, yet sound and constructive leadership.

I have pointed out that the mayor of this city can do much to restore sound government, that he can and should be a community leader, not a follower. I have stressed the importance of leadership in time of war, a time when every effort must be used for the full mobilization of our resources for the war effort.

I have pointed out that Minneapolis is suffering from a do-nothing policy in the mayor's office.

I have pointed out that effective leadership has been lacking in the designing of programs that would combat juvenile delinquency, revitalize our government, restore our city to financial solvency, plan for post-war business expansion, ensure harmonious labor-management relations, and plan for needed community redevelopment.

The evidence is overwhelming that the present mayor has failed to use the authority and influence of his office to launch the needed programs for community redevelopment and civic betterment.

The true record proves that the present mayor -- in spite of promises and declarations, in spite of proclamations and publicity -- has followed a do-nothing policy -- a policy of straddling the fence and evading responsibility,

The mayor of Minneapolis, under provisions of the present charter, can be a leader. He can be vigorous in his exercise of the authority of his office. He can coordinate and integrate the machinery of government. As a member of nearly all the city's numerous boards and commissions he can coordinate the many governmental activities and represent the interests of the entire city.

Just as the President gives to Congress and the people a report on the state of our nation, so our mayor should bring before the people of Minneapolis periodic reports on the activities of our various governmental agencies.

In other words, it all depends on whether the mayor chooses to exert the influence and prestige of his office, whether he takes the course of least resistance and whether he is willing and able to work for, plan for, and fight for a greater Minneapolis.

Recently you may have received a campaign paper which is described as a summary of the administration of the present mayor and, may I say, in passing, an out-and-out mud slinging attack upon my candidacy. This paper is known as "The Record."

Well --- let's look at the record -- let's look at the true record.

In the present mayor's campaign of 1941 he stated that if he were elected he would stay home and be constantly on the job. Even in his present campaign he is now repeating that promise and claiming that he has practiced what he preached.

Yes, the mayor did stay home. He stayed home when he should have been in Washington, D. C., seeing to it that Minneapolis received its fair share of housing. The critical housing situation that faces our community is one that has been developing for the past four years and should have been met by intelligent action long ago.

Even today, with hundreds of wives and families of service men facing eviction from their housing quarters on July 1 and with over five thousand requests for housing, the present mayor has neither a program, a policy nor a plan to remedy this situation.

Yes, your mayor has stayed home. He has stayed in the mayor's office when he should have been over at the State Capitol fighting for important legislation affecting Minneapolis -- legislation concerning housing, social welfare, education, taxation and the financial solvency of our city.

One of the best indications of how energetically the mayor has interested himself in matters of civic interest is his attendance and conduct as a member of the several important agencies of our city government.

The agencies of which he is a member perform vital functions for the community. They establish tax rates, provide library services, determine public welfare policies, study and approve city planning and zoning, and determine over-all park and recreational policies.

It would seem that leadership with respect to these functions require at the minimum the mayor's attendance. Yet an examination of the minutes of the meetings of the boards and commissions reveals the striking fact that the mayor has been repeatedly absent, not just occasionally but constantly.

Let us look at the true record -- the official record. The Board of Estimate and Taxation is an extremely important governmental agency, especially in view of the difficult financial condition of our city. This board has held, since the present mayor assumed office, a total of 168 sessions. The mayor has been absent from 71 of these meetings, or almost 50 per cent.

Despite the fact that the Board of Estimate and Taxation is concerned with the vital problem of raising city money, reviewing the city budget, and determining the cities tax rate, the mayor has regarded its functions so lightly that he has failed to attend almost half of its sessions.

Another important agency of which the mayor is a member, is the Park Board. The Park Board has had, since the present mayor assumed office, a total of 97 scheduled meetings, from which the mayor has been absent 55 times. This means that the mayor has failed in his duties with respect to the park Board two-thirds of the time.

Of even greater importance to the future of Minneapolis is the City Planning Commission. This body has had a total of one hundred scheduled meetings from July 1, 1941, to January 1, 1945. Of these 100 meetings, the present mayor has been absent 70 times, which is almost three-fourths of the time. Moreover, other members of the commission tell me he frequently attends only long enough to be present for roll call.



Again the mayor regarded his work lightly despite the fact that the Planning Commission is concerned with our most vital problem -- the problem of planning for the Minneapolis of tomorrow.

Informed citizens know that the Minneapolis Park Board and the Planning Commission played an important part in establishing the very important Metropolitan Airport Terminal. Yet the mayor of this city was absent from the meetings of the Park Board and the Planning Commission almost three-fourths of the time.

Let me be more specific. On January 16, 1943, the mayor of St. Paul called the first meeting to discuss airport legislation. The mayor of St. Paul had time to be present but the mayor of Minneapolis was not there.

On February 6, 1943, former Governor Harold Stassen took a hand in the airport question. Governor Stassen held a conference in the state Capitol, inviting representatives of the Twin Cities to discuss with him and the legislators numerous bills pertaining to the airport project. The Mayor of St. Paul had time to be there but the mayor of Minneapolis was absent.

On March 26, 1943, the State Senate Aviation Committee held hearings on the proposed legislation to establish the Twin Cities Airport Commission. Again the mayor of Minneapolis was too busy, as he put it, to be present.

Is this what our present mayor calls leadership? Is this what is meant when his campaign literature states that he was instrumental in setting up the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Airport Commission?

Let us examine the matter of the City Planning Commission, just a little bit more closely. Let us take a look at the true record -- the official record. Not only was the mayor absent from the Planning Commission meetings almost three-fourths of the time but he failed to follow the recommendations of that commission.

On February 17, 1943, our City Planning Commission, of which the present mayor is a member, proposed that an organization to be called the Postwar Development Council be formed. It would include representatives of civic organizations, technical experts, representatives of labor, business and social agencies. The Planning Commission incorporated this proposal in the commission's report.

It was a definite responsibility of the mayor to follow through on this recommendation. Yet to this date nothing has been done. No post-war development council has been formed and all proposals to establish a Greater Minneapolis Association or a Postwar Development Council have been ignored.

I have called upon the present mayor to establish a Greater Minneapolis Association to represent the various interests in our city. I have called upon the mayor to obtain from the City Council additional funds for our Planning Commission so that its research and its technical facilities could be implemented. But, as with so many other things, nothing has been done. Excellent proposals have been filed away -- precious time has been lost. The mayor has done nothing to set in motion a community organization to guarantee a greater future for Minneapolis.

Under terms of our City Charter, the mayor is a member of the Library Board. Minneapolis is facing a critical situation with respect to the maintenance of its Library facilities. It has been necessary to curtail services because of inadequate funds and in this election a proposal has been placed before the people to add additional tax revenue in order to support our libraries.

The library, like the school, is the very heart and core of the cultured community. From July 1, 1941, to January 1, 1945, the mayor has been present at library meetings only 8 times out of a total of 60 sessions.

In other words, the present mayor has shown almost no interest in your library or in its services.

Again let us look at the true record. The present mayor claims that he laid plans for a realistic approach for adequate housing. If ever the present mayor failed to provide leadership, truly it was with respect to the matter of housing.

Our city is faced with a critical housing shortage that runs into thousands of units. The wives and families of servicemen are living in facilities unfit for human habitation and recent reports reveal that more than 700 servicemen will be evicted from their present homes because they are being sold to other persons.

Months ago the present mayor should have come forth with a program of action that would assist the wives and families of servicemen in finding suitable living quarters. He should have cooperated with the City Council in their efforts to place housing legislation before the state legislature.

Instead, the mayor has drifted along. He has presented no program. He did not appear before the recent session of the state legislature. He has shown no active interest in either public or private housing. He has given no leadership or program to meet our critical situation. He is without a program. He is without a policy. He is without a plan.

This, then, is the true record-- the true record of the present mayor. Can anyone doubt that Minneapolis city government is in need of revitalization? Can anyone doubt that there is need for new ideas and new leadership in the mayor's office?

As I have said so many times and as I wish to emphasize again, the mayor's office is not without power. The mayor of Minneapolis can have real influence in creating a greater Minneapolis.

We can have community redevelopment. We can have a housing program. We can have business expansion. We can have adequate law enforcement. We can

have sound programs of economic and social betterment. But we can't have these things if the mayor of this city is a do-nothing mayor.

We cannot have these things unless the citizens of Minneapolis are willing to fight the corrosion of indifference that has so long characterized the mayor's office.

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~~Despite the fact that~~ The Board of Estimate and Taxation is concerned with the vital problem of raising city money, reviewing the city budget, and determining the cities tax rate <sup>*yet*</sup> the mayor has regarded its functions so lightly that he has failed to attend almost half of its sessions.

*Is it any wonder that our city faces a critical tax and revenue problem! The leadership requires sufficient concern and interest in civic matters to be in ~~attention~~ *attention* Being on the job but 50% of the time can at its best produce but half-hearted measures and half-way + half-hearted measures cannot provide a solution to our Tax problem.*



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