

For immediate release
Hubert H. Humphrey (D. Minn)
452 Senate Office Building
NA 3120, Ext. 881
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REPLY TO HAROLD E. STASSEN

By
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Last week those of you who were listening to this network were subjected to a most extraordinary attack on the President of the United States. Some of you may have been sympathetic to the criticism of Mr. Truman's policies. Some of you may have shut off the radio. But I am sure that those who continued listening were shocked at the type of attack which was made.

I, myself, was deeply shocked. And personally embarrassed. I come from the State of Minnesota of which I am justly proud. I am privileged to serve as a United States Senator from that State. So it was especially difficult for me to realize that the slashing irresponsible attack poured out over the air came from a man who at one time had been the Governor of my State - Mr. Harold Stassen.

As a citizen and elected representative from Minnesota I wish to set the record straight.

Mr. Stassen in no way spoke for the millions of Americans who respect and admire their President. Nor did he speak for those Americans, who, at times, feel compelled to constructively criticize the President and his policies. He in no way spoke for the three million citizens of Minnesota, the overwhelming majority of whom cast their vote for President Truman in 1948, just as they have supported the New Deal and the Fair Deal in every election since 1932. To be sure, the President has his political critics in Minnesota, but I am proud to say that that criticism comes with good taste and with good manners. Effective and constructive criticism is essential to the preservation of democracy. Irresponsible and reckless criticism is destructive of democracy.

But, Mr. Stassen did not criticize - he vilified. Distasteful as his methods were, and in his case under the circumstances strangely reminiscent of the fox and the sour grapes, the false charges of Mr. Stassen could easily be dismissed as the bitter voice of an ambitious but unsuccessful candidate for the office of President. We could have ignored these charges except for one thing. Mr. Stassen represents a pattern of political conduct and political strategy which the disgruntled Republican Party is trying to design out of the rags and tatters of their despair. For eighteen long years they have tried every political trick in the book to win the support of the American people. Yes,

tricks they have used - not program; trickery - not leadership. Their political sideshow has been repudiated. Having nothing of their own to offer the people of this country, in desperation they have decided to try to tear down what Mr. Truman has offered. Mind you, they offer no real alternative. They do not offer a constructive program.

This attack was timed by the Republican leadership to discredit our President at the very moment that he was going to the people to make a direct report. The partisans of privilege do not want a President who speaks plainly and honestly to the American people. The representatives of privilege fear the democratic example of a President being with and speaking directly to the people.

Yes, the Republican leadership well remembers that when President Truman last went to the people in that memorable campaign of 1948, the people came by the thousands to hear his message. That message was the program of the Democratic Party. The people accepted that message. They believed in their President. They demonstrated their belief and their faith in him by their votes. That message was the program of the Democratic Party. The people accepted that message. They believed in their President. They demonstrated their belief and their faith in him by their votes.

Yes, in 1948 President Truman went to the people and said, "I believe in the people of this country and I believe in the principles on which this country was founded. I believe in their right to work and to be healthy and to live decently. I believe, that as a free people, we have an additional responsibility to the rest of the world, and that, as a democratic nation, we can and must help the other democratic nations of the world to prevent the aggression of Communism".

But, the President didn't stop there. He told the people exactly what he proposed to do to make this possible. He spoke of housing legislation, of strengthening the Social Security Act, of increasing the minimum wage, of providing health legislation, and of enacting laws giving all citizens an equal opportunity to work.

Since then the President has stood by his word. It is this which annoys, disturbs and confounds the opposition. Could it be because of the President's integrity, his courage, his program, and his identity with the people that Mr. Stassen calls him, "the worst President ever to occupy the White House"?

In his first message to the 81st Congress, Mr. Truman presented a complete program which would carry out his pledges.

In the field of foreign policy, he re-emphasized the importance of an aggressive, constructive program of economic assistance to the democratic nations of Europe in their struggle against Communism. He proposed a bold new program to help the under-developed and under-privileged areas of the world, so that they, too, might become strong and able partners with us in the fight for freedom.

The President sent to the Congress a series of measures to guarantee basic civil rights, and equality of opportunity to all people.

He proposed the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and the establishment of a fair standard of labor-management relations vital to a free economy.

He outlined to Congress a comprehensive slum-clearance and housing program that met the needs of our low-income families, farmers, our middle-income groups and veterans.

The President requested of the Congress enactment of a broad health program. He had promised the people he would try to give them basic economic security, and true to his word, he sent to the Congress a bill raising the amount of monthly allowance for old age insurance and expanding its coverage to include many people who now receive no insurance at all.

Yes, Mr. Truman is fulfilling his promises. He has fought for his program. He has presented to the Congress realistic proposals. Here we have a President who understands the practical, everyday needs of the American people.

Despite the bitter opposition of the Republican Party and their Dixiecrat friends in the Congress, real progress has been made. We have a new housing act which will help clean out some of the worst slums in the nation and relieve the serious housing shortage.

We have a new minimum wage law providing for 75 cents an hour. We have moved forward in improving the nation's health. We have provided for the farmer -- grain storage and price supports.

Under the constant prodding of the President, we have begun the difficult process of re-organizing and modernizing the governmental machinery.

And, before this Congress adjourns we shall do much more!

But, some parts of the Fair Deal program have not been carried out. And who do you suppose is responsible? Not the President, who outlined the program. Not the supporters of the Fair Deal, who voted for these proposals. Not at all!

It is the members of the party to which Mr. Stassen and Mr. Gabrielson belong who have blocked good legislation - with the help of their Dixiecrat allies. It was this coalition, repudiated in the last election, that blocked repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and has successfully resisted the enactment of basic civil rights legislation. It was this coalition which defeated a proposal for middle-income housing. It is this unrepresentative coalition that defeats the will of the American people.

Now, a word about our foreign policy. First, I wish to pay tribute to the leadership of that distinguished Republican Senator from Michigan, Arthur Vandenberg, for his magnificent efforts in attempting to breath into the Republican Party an understanding of its obligations in the field of international affairs. I also pay honor to those who have joined with him in fulfilling the obligations of a bi-partisan foreign policy.

But, the Republican Party policy-makers, from its National Chairman to its Senate leaders from Nebraska and Ohio, are leading the Republican Party back into isolationism. Oh, yes, they are unwilling to say they are isolationists - they just say they are "economizers". With the world on fire, they think it is important to save on water or to keep half of the fire-fighting equipment safely tucked away in the firehouse.

The efforts to scuttle the Marshall Plan come from the Republican leadership. The insults to our neighbors and allies come from that same leadership. The efforts to weaken the reciprocal trade program come from the Republican leadership. The recent unsuccessful attempt in the United States Senate to defeat the important Point Four program of assistance to the under-privileged and under-developed nations came from the Republican side.

The same Republican leadership that has initiated and encouraged an irresponsible and unsubstantiated attack on the State Department, would, by their votes and their actions, scuttle our most effective weapon against world communism - the Marshall Plan.

This is their official record.

What is the program of the Republican Party? What constructive proposals are they offering the people? A careful analysis will reveal there is no program. There are no proposals. But there surely is a campaign strategy.

It is imperative that every American identify this Republican strategy for what it really is - a strategy to deceive, to confuse, to bewilder, and to frighten the American people. We have seen this strategy unfold itself under the guise of such terms as Welfare State, Statism, Socialism, Regimentation, and Communism. These scare words have been hurled about with reckless irresponsibility. This is but the beginning of a frenzied effort to stampede the American people into a state of confusion and fear.

They are unwilling to clarify the issues. The Republican leadership is unwilling to tell the American people for what it truly stands. Well, let me tell you.

What the Republican Party really opposes is a program to provide a decent minimum of economic security for the American people. This is what they mean when they cry, "Welfare State and Socialism". What the Republican leadership really opposes is a constructive program to increase the living standards of the American people through the cooperative efforts of a government of the people working with the people. This is what they mean when they shout regimentation and statism. Yes, what the Republican leadership really opposes is a program to strengthen the democratic nations in Europe and Asia in their struggle against world Communism.

Well, our President is on the road again taking the issues to the people, calming their fears, and reaffirming their faith.

The President will have the opportunity again to warn the people in these dangerous moments of the world that American democracy has grave responsibilities. He will speak in the spirit of Franklin Roosevelt, who, in the dark days of 1938 cautioned us with this following message:

"We in America know that our democratic institutions can be preserved and made to work. But in order to preserve them we need ... to prove that the practical operation of democratic government is equal to the task of protecting the security of the people."

Our President and the Fair Deal program are committed to the welfare of the people, for we know that as a nation we are only as strong as the people.



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