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SENATOR HUBERT HUMPHREY

Some of us in this room are old enough to remember the year in which ADA was founded. But since these are times when the rewriting of history seems to be the most popular national pastime, I feel compelled to recall the circumstances under which this organization was born just eight years ago.

Then, as now, democracy was under fire from the totalitarians of the Left as well as the Right. The dream of a united, post-war world was dying; the expansionist Soviet empire was on the march. But there were too many men in our own country and abroad who refused to abandon old illusions or to recognize the nature of the new challenge. The Communists and their fellow travellers were promoting on every side the false and vicious charge that the Truman Administration was inciting a world conflict. And, in that year, too many liberals seemed to be listening attentively to that lie.

But the reactionary isolationists were no less active. They talked only of reducing our world commitments, of cutting defense programs, or getting back to "normalcy." Everywhere democracy seemed to be divided, confused, and hesitant.

That was the year, too, of a fateful Republican primary in the state of Wisconsin. Seeking renomination was a distinguished and revered Senator named Robert M. LaFollette; the name of his opponent bore striking resemblance to that of the man who was then managing the New York Yankees. Although I do not wish to seem to be interfering in the sovereign affairs of the state of Wisconsin, it is difficult to avoid a realization of the tragic nature of that contest. Bob LaFollette was a fighting liberal with a deep awareness of the gravity of the post-war Soviet threat. Because he spoke out early and fearlessly on that issue, the Communists marked him for defeat.

And it is a simple matter of history that their opposition to LaFollette in that open Wisconsin primary helped to drive him from public life and to pave the way for the arrival of the man whose namesake had loomed so large in the baseball archives of our times.

All that seems very long ago, and I bring it up now only because it is time, I think, that we in ADA abandon any spirit of defensiveness in the face of the continuing smear attack against our organization.

There are times when I think ADA ought to be known by the initials ACBM--meaning, simply, Anti-Communists-Before-McCarthy. We fought this fight in the public arena in America before it became fashionable for a lot of politicians to do so; and long before a junior Senator from Wisconsin found his way in Wheeling, West Virginia, we had inflicted great and decisive defeats on the Communists in the USA. We had simultaneously rallied millions of our countrymen to the support of those programs of resistance to Communist aggression such as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan which may some day be remembered as the turning points in the annals of our century.

I have some rather strong personal feelings about this chapter in our history because, as the elders here will recall, I would not be in the U.S. Senate if the Communists in Minnesota had had their way, and the same is true of Paul Douglas and others who are the current targets of some of the Johnny-Come-Lately's in this battle.

In that year we in ADA fought Republican reaction and Communist confusionism and, if I may be permitted an immodest word, we licked them.

Now, it is the year 1954, and in some ways we face a replica of that fight. Our country's world position is still under attack from both the reactionary isolationists and the Communists. There are men in the Congress who believe it is more important to uproot a Communist dentist in the armed services--and it is important--than to save Southeast Asia from the advancing Communist legions. And there are still

simple-minded characters who succumb to the Communist view that there is something new and dynamic and progressive about the slave regimes which Communism imposes wherever it achieves power.

But the great new dimension in our political life is the rise of what must be characterized as a know-nothing political movement. In 1946 we had to fight both isolationists and Communists; but the distinguishing fact about the isolationists of 1954 is that they pretend to be the leaders of anti-Communism and the saviors of our liberty. What they have actually succeeded in doing to an appalling degree is to divert our national attention from the clear and present danger of Soviet aggression, to undermine the respect we once held in the world community of free men, and to stifle the processes of national debate through which a great democracy should be confronting the desperate issues of our time. At a moment when all our national wisdom should be employed in the quest for solutions to the awesome terrors of the Hydrogen-Age, we find ourselves plunged into venomous and often irrelevant fratricidal conflicts that dishonor and debase our traditions. We are compelled to spend so much time challenging the big lie that we seem to have little chance to search for the basic truths that might help lead mankind out of the present world impasse. Worst of all, at an hour when we should be exalting the institutions of freedom, we are allowing them to be tarnished by this madness of know-nothingness.

But to you and our friends abroad, let me say this: I believe the tide has begun to turn. America is not to be found in the headlines, nor is its spirit and faith to be discovered by Gallup Polls. Even the fearful must admit that the condition of freedom in our country today, despite the continuing assault, is more promising than it was a year ago. When we last met many felt that this was a pretty lonely battle. Now men in all areas of our national life have begun to speak out. The President of the United States has described himself as a good friend of a distinguished commentator whom the junior Senator from Wisconsin has tried to depict as a sinister

subversive. Much as the Republican high command may have wished to exploit hooliganism in this campaign, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the GOP to preserve the fiction that it is one happy family.

Now, as in 1946, the fighting faith of our organization is freedom. We have no double standard. We do not let oppression and injustice in our own country blind us to the massive totalitarian threat which hangs over all humanity. But neither do we allow our awareness of this external challenge to diminish our devotion to the processes of freedom which once made America the hope of oppressed multitudes throughout the world. Now, as before, we are engaged in a two-front war against tyranny abroad and reaction at home. It is a long war, and the end is not in sight. We may have to live through years of tension and uncertainty; in such a time, demagogues will flourish, exploiting men's anxieties and inciting their darkest instincts.

It is often said of us in ADA that we are the egg-heads. If that term denotes our respect for the intelligence of our countrymen, our faith in their sense of justice, our reverence for the processes of free and honest debate, then I think we should welcome the description. The notion that men should use their brains in dealing with the crises of our century seems to me a highly respectable one; if, in the course of our deliberations this week-end, we are caught thinking, I hope we shall not feel compelled to deny the accusation. If there is anything clear about the age in which we live, it is that we need new ideas and bolder thoughts than ever before. This is our great advantage in any contest with the totalitarians-- that we believe in man's right to think and even to dream. These have been our precious possessions; let no one take them away from us. As someone has said before me, egg-heads of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your brains.



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