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TITLE: GOP 'JOHNNY COME LATELYS' ON SOCIAL SECURITY, SENATOR HUMPHREY SAYS

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Sent by Larry Anderson, Thursday, October 14, 1954)



# NEWS RELEASE

## from the **HUMPHREY** for **SENATOR** **VOLUNTEERS**

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### GOP 'JOHNNY COME LATELYS' ON SOCIAL SECURITY, SENATOR HUMPHREY SAYS

Calling the Republicans "just a bunch of Johnny-come-latelys" in their recent support of social security, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey today called for "raising our sights" of humanitarian objectives in taking care of the nation's aged and needy.

Senator Humphrey called for expanding coverage and increasing benefits "to keep pace with higher living costs".

In a luncheon address at Duluth, Senator Humphrey said that the Social Security expansion passed recently by Congress was a "good bill -- just as good as it was when the Democrats proposed it five years ago".

But, Senator Humphrey added, "you would have had these improvements years ago if it hadn't been for Republican opposition". He pointed out that the expanded coverage provided in the new bill was proposed five years ago by President Truman but opposed by 79% of the House Republicans.

"The Republicans are pointing with pride to increased benefits and expanded coverage, but you'd have had more benefits today if you had a Democratic Congress, passing a Democratic social security law".

Senator Humphrey pointed out that Democrats had proposed higher benefit payments, immediate payments for disabled workers, and a lower retirement age for women workers.

"We still need these improvements", Senator Humphrey said. "If the Republicans are sincere in their new-found love for social security, I invite them to join me now in pledging to work for such improvements at the next session.

"I invite them to pledge, as I have, to work for a minimum \$5 increase in monthly old age assistance, and for a food stamp plan to supplement that meager assistance by making use of our abundance of food to offset the high cost of living squeezing pensioners and other needy people."

Senator Humphrey charged the Republican administration with trying to "re-write history" so as to make voters believe that "there never was such a thing as die-hard Old Guard opposition to the great social welfare programs of the 1930s".

He called attention to a statement in a recent report of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare which said that "Overwhelming bi-partisan support passed the 1935 social security act".

"What were the facts?" Senator Humphrey asked. "Check the record for yourself . . . and you'll find that House Republicans voted 95 to 1 to kill the original social security bill in 1935".

"We could dismiss a lot of this as past history, if there had been some real sign of a change of heart among the Republicans", Senator Humphrey said. "But I can find no sign of a reform -- not even as late as 1954, when 9 out of 15 Republican members of the House Ways and Means Committee voted against one of the key proposals in President Eisenhower's plan."

OUTLINE OF SPEECH ON SOCIAL SECURITY

I. Republicans are making great claims about the new social security bill.

- A. From their claims, you'd think they invented social security!
- B. New bill a good bill -- just as good as when Democrats proposed it 5 years ago.
- C. But for GOP opposition, you'd have had these improvements years ago.

D. Under a Democratic Congress you'd have gotten even greater benefits.

1. If you're disabled at age 40, Democrats favor paying disability benefits immediately instead of at age 65.

2. Democrats favor benefits paid during short illnesses.

3. Democrats favor lowering the retirement age for women.

Cut here 4. Your best hope for greater social security is to elect a Democratic Congress November 2.

II. The GOP is trying to rewrite history to make voters forget die-hard opposition of 1930's.

A. 1953 report of Department of Health, Education & Welfare says:

"Overwhelming bipartisan support passed the 1935 social security act."

B. GOP may have short memory, but voters don't. They remember --

1. Rep. Dan Reed of New York predicting in 1935 that 25 million Americans would have to submit to fingerprint test, and have fingerprints filed in Washington with Al Capone's.

2. House Republicans voting 95 to 1 to kill the 1935 Social Security bill.

3. Alf Landon campaigning for social security repeal, calling it "a cruel hoax".

4. The "dog-tag scare" started by GOP National Chairman Hamilton a few days before the 1936 election when he predicted 27 million workers would have to wear stainless steel dog tags.

C. The GOP has shown no signs of reforming in recent years.

Cut here 1. GOP 80th Congress did nothing to expand social security actually narrowed coverage.

2. In 1949, 79% of House GOP voted against same provisions they now claim as their own.
3. In 1949, Ike said, "If all Americans want is security, they can go to prison."
4. In 1953, the GOP appointed as head of a social security study committee a man who called social security "totally unmoral" in 1949.
5. In 1954, 9 of 15 GOP Committee members voted against Ike proposal for raising "earnings base" from \$3600 to \$4200 -- Democratic votes put over Ike proposal.

III. In spite of GOP boasting, they are merely "Jokrry-Come-Lately" on Social Security.

ANECDOTE:

Their sudden conversion like that of a repentant church-goer who jumped to his feet in a revival meeting saying, "I've been a sinner, a contemptible sinner. I **been** doing wrong all these years, but I never knew it before tonight."

To which deacon stationed in the aisle replies:

"Sit down, brother and be quiet, The rest of us knew it all the time."



You are probably going to hear a lot from the Republicans during this coming campaign about the extension of social security coverage voted by the Congress this year.

The Republicans will point with pride to increased benefits and expanded coverage. To hear them talk, you'd actually think social security was a Republican invention!

Now I don't want you to think I'm criticizing this new bill. It's a good bill - just as good as it was when the Democrats proposed it five years ago!

The fact is, you'd have had these improvements years ago, if it hadn't been for Republican opposition. And you'd have had more benefits today if you had a Democratic Congress passing a Democratic social security law.

Take benefit levels, for example. One of the most important things in determining the level of your benefits is the so-called "earnings base" - the top salary figure that can be used to figure out benefits. The "earnings base" has been \$3,600. Under the new bill it will be \$4,200 - but only because Democratic votes put in the higher figure over Republican opposition. Actually, many Democrats would like to see the "earnings base" even higher than \$4,200. They would like to see it raised to \$4,800 or \$6,000 - which would mean higher benefits to those of you who are lucky enough to make more than \$4,200 a year.

Then if you're disabled, say at age 40, the Democrats would like to have you start drawing your social security benefits right away, while the Republican bill makes you wait a full 25 years - until you reach age 65 - before drawing your benefits.

Many Democrats favor paying you benefits if you're sick and unable to work for a few weeks. The Republican bill is silent on this.

For you ladies, the Democrats favor lowering the retirement age to 60, but the Republican bill keeps the retirement age at 65.

So, while this Democratic bill passed by a Republican Congress is a good bill, there is still room for improvement, and your best hope for getting that

improvement is to elect a Democratic Congress this fall.

Now you may have thought I was kidding a moment ago when I said that to hear the Republicans talk you'd think they invented social security. But I wasn't kidding one bit. It seems that the Republicans are now transferring their talents for rewriting history from foreign policy to domestic policy. According to the new Republican version of history, there never was such a thing as die-hard Old Guard opposition to the great social welfare programs of the 1930's.

Here, believe it or not, is what the 1953 Report of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare has to say about the original social security act -- and I quote:

"Overwhelming bipartisan support passed the 1935 social security act."

My, what short memories these Republicans have!

But I know that none of you has so short a memory. Oh, perhaps you may have forgotten this dire prediction made in 1935 by Congressman Dan Reed of New York -- who still heads the Committee that handles social security. Listen to this:

"The lash of the dictator will be felt. And 25 million free American citizens will for the first time submit themselves to a fingerprint test and have their finger prints filed down here with those of Al Capone and every jailbird and racketeer in the country."

Perhaps you don't recall that the Republicans in the House voted 95 to 1 to kill the original social security bill.

But I'll bet most of you remember the campaign of 1936, when Alf Landon campaigned for repeal of the new social security law, calling it "folly" and a "cruel hoax" on workers.

And I'll bet you remember the old "dog-tag scare" that was started just a few days before the 1936 election by the Chairman of the Republican National Committee, Mr. John Hamilton. On October 31, 1936, Mr. Hamilton charged that

"the Administration already is planning a regimentation of the country's 27 million workers which will be so complete that every one will be numbered with metal

identification tags similar to those worn in the World War....'They have stipulated that the tags be made of stainless steel so that they will not stain the skins of those who wear them.'"

Now every single person here knows how untrue that was. It was a deliberate lie, intended to hide the real issue and scare the voters. And it can't be passed off as a ridiculous remark by some crack-pot soap-box politician - that was the Chairman of the Republican National Committee speaking - the top officer in the Republican Party, supposedly a responsible party official.

How many of you heard the radio spot announcements plugged by the GOP National Committee during the 1936 campaign? Do you remember this announcement that they sent over thousands of radios, over and over again? Listen to this:

"....in 1937, you will be assigned a number; that will be your number wherever you work as long as you live. No name, just a New Deal number."

Now, we could dismiss a lot of this talk as past history, water under the bridge, if there had been some sign of a change of heart among the Republicans. But I can find no sign of a reform, not even during the recent years. In 1948, for example, the Republican 80th Congress didn't take a single step to improve the social security program - in fact, they actually narrowed social security coverage.

And in 1949, when President Truman asked for an expanded program, 79% of the House GOP voted against the very same provisions that they proudly claim as their own today!

And it was in 1949 - just five years ago - that President Eisenhower - then General Eisenhower - told us what he thought he thought of social security. In a speech at Galveston, Texas, he said:

"If all that Americans want is security, they can go to prison. They'll have enough to eat, a bed and a roof over their heads."

Was there any sign of a Republican change of heart in 1953, when they appointed as head of a social security study committee a man who was known to be

violently opposed to the whole idea of social security - Congressman Carl Curtis of Nebraska who, only four years earlier, had denounced the whole program as "grossly unsound," "ineffective," and "totally unmoral."

And even as late as this year, 1954, the GOP was still so set against social security, that 9 out of the 15 Republicans on the House Ways and Means Committee, which handled the new bill, voted against one of the key proposals in President Eisenhower's plan - the proposal to raise the earnings base from \$3,600 to \$4,200. That raise - which means greater benefit payments for you social security contributors - was passed only by the votes of the Democrats on the committee.

So, in spite of all the Republican boasting about expanding the social security program, it's pretty obvious that they are really a bunch of "Johnny-come-latelys" on social security.

In fact, their sudden conversion reminds me of an old story about a church revival society.

During a revival meeting in a back-country church, the eloquence of the evangelist was so persuasive that one of the repentant members jumped to his feet, shouting out:

"I've been a sinner, a contemptible sinner. I been doing wrong all these years - but I never knew it before tonight."

But a deacon stationed in the aisle turned to him and whispered: "Sit down, brother, and be quiet. The rest of us knew it all the time!"

That's right - the rest of us knew it all the time.

So I urge you to think twice - and ask yourself - is your social security program really secure in the hands of the Republicans?

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*Sp. File - Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>  
Duluth*

DISTRIBUTION

TITLE: FEDERAL AID GAVE MINNESOTA 1,955 MORE HOSPITAL BEDS

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## NEWS RELEASE

# from the HUMPHREY for SENATOR VOLUNTEERS

1722 HENNEPIN AVENUE, MINNEAPOLIS 3, MINNESOTA

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### FEDERAL AID GAVE MINNESOTA 1,955 MORE HOSPITAL BEDS

Minnesota's critical shortage of adequate hospital facilities has been "greatly alleviated" through federal aid under the Democratic-sponsored Hill-Burton Act, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey declared last night in a television broadcast in Duluth.

"In the seven years since this act was written in 1947, 43 hospital construction projects have been approved for Minnesota, with federal aid amounting to \$13,054,750.

"When all of them are completed, these projects provide 1,955 more hospital beds for the ill and suffering of our state.

"Where would our communities be today, without this assistance toward better hospital facilities?

"Is this what our Republican friends mean, when they criticize Democratic 'spending'? Would they have banned the \$510,680 in federal aid for St. Mary's hospital in Duluth, or the \$387,320 in aid provided for St. Luke's Infirmary in the same city?

"Would they have left 43 Minnesota communities go without adequate hospital facilities, just shrugging their shoulders and saying it wasn't their worry, if you got sick?

"That seems to be their attitude, for they opposed our efforts to obtain the full \$150 million annual appropriation authorized by Congress for this hospital construction program and allocated only half as much.

"America is still critically short of hospital facilities. Surveys authorized under the Hill-Burton Act show 812,000 beds are still needed. Many Minnesota communities are still on the 'waiting list' for participating in these funds -- waiting, apparently, until a Democratic Congress can carry out the program it started", Senator Humphrey said.



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