

THE CALL FOR LEADERSHIP 00731

Remarks of

Senator Hubert H. Humphrey

Democratic Party Brunch
Casper, Wyoming
April 26, 1959

*Casper
Sunday*

*About our
Party
History!!*

Sunday is a day for sober thought about the things that are lost sight of in the clatter of the working week -- a busy week for all of you as it has been for me travelling throughout this great West of ours.

It is in this respectful spirit of sober thought that I am here to talk about politics -- the same kind of politics that sounded this morning from pulpits in Casper, Wyoming, and from thousands of others across the land.

Here this morning, and everywhere else, congregations of Americans were called upon to rededicate themselves to two tasks.

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The first task was to know the difference between
justice and injustice, between freedom and oppression,
between order and disorder.

The second and related task, was to act in the
right as God gives us the power to know ^{and see} ~~where~~ the right
~~resides~~.

I feel deeply this ^{challenge} ~~summons~~ from the ~~pulpit~~ to
unite the mind and the will in social effort ^{for the common good.}

↳ To play a part in the ^{practice} ~~art~~ of government, to play
a part in the mainstream of our political life, is to
respond to that great ^{challenge} ~~summons~~.

↳ Politics is a creative social act that must be
engaged in by anyone who takes seriously the call to
thought and action ~~he hears from the pulpit~~.

↳ Through the art of politics, we define, advance,
test and decide whether this or that proposal can best
serve the common interest.

Through the art of politics, public opinion makes its presence felt as a controlling, disciplining and guiding force in the operations of government.

In this complex world of politics, as well as life itself, not all is sharply black or white, good or evil. People of differing views can have equal depth of conviction.

Neither political party in America is perfect; neither political party is all bad.

But having said that much, I proclaim my pride in being a Democrat.

We are the only national party there is in America -- the only party with a representation in the national government rising from the South as well as the North, from the West as well as the East.

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✓ Sure, if we were only a regional party like

the Republicans, we could talk to each other in whispers.

But a national party has special communications problems.

It must talk across great spaces, amid the roar of great

rivers of humanity, and must overcome great barriers to

sight and sound.

✓ When a Democrat in Alabama speaks his heart and

mind to a Democrat in Wyoming, he has to raise his

voice in order to be heard. For a Democrat here in

Wyoming to be heard by one in New York, he too, has to

raise his voice.

*in other words spell out the issue
and the program*

✓ There may at times appear to be differences

Democratic
within our family, as there are on occasion in any

family -- but it would be a fatal mistake for our

political opponents to ever think for a moment that

we do not stand shoulder to shoulder together as

*Family
References*

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Democrats for common goals of progress and development.

✓ We have room for and want people of conviction
who will speak up for those convictions within our
party's framework. We are not a party of "thought
control" or rigid intellectual discipline. We want to
be a ["]blend of the best that is in all of us -- and all
~~of us~~
of us have something to contribute.

✓ Incidentally, our new blend seems to have more of
a Western ^{flavor} ~~accent~~ than ever before.

The fact that we Democrats argue among ourselves
on occasion ^{indicates} ~~says~~ something good and fine about the size
and health of our family.

✓ It says that we are the only party with interests
that are as varied as the nation itself. We are the
only party that embraces the laborer and the businessman,
the farmer and the miner, the rancher and the office-worker,

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the field hand and the white collar professional,
the young and the old, the consumer and the producer --
and a lot more besides.

Pop & Spec. Interests

↳ If we were like the Republicans, resting on
but a few strong ^{spirit} interests, the strongest of the few
could have its way among us without argument. These
few could act like the admissions committee for the
Union League Club, blackballing any applicant who
threatened to breathe the spirit of life into their
overstuffed mausoleum.

↳ In an otherwise uncertain world, there is at
least one certainty. It is that any single interest
in the Democratic party which tried to make every
other interest act like all were a pack of identical
twins, soon would find itself standing all alone in
not so splendid isolation. A party in which so many

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+vital
strong national interests are included, will not tolerate

dictation by any one or any combination of them. Instead,

we are going to keep up a running debate about how best

to adjust and resolve conflicts between equally

legitimate claims for support by the party as a whole.

This, indeed, is the great single service the Democratic Party has performed for the nation. We have a two-sided proof of how important this work is.

One side of the proof came in 1860. As of that year, the Democratic party was the only political force which still held the Union together. But when the Democrats from the North and the South, along with their respective interests, pulled apart until each stood alone, the government itself was torn apart and we had our Civil War.

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The other side of the proof came in the years that followed the Civil War. The regular organs of the government were then incapable of doing the work of national reunion. But at this juncture, the Democratic party served the purposes of the government when Northern Democrats and the pre-Civil War Southern Democrats reknit the broken ends of their national party -- to talk and to argue with each other once more, and so to reestablish a sense of community.

*Some say -
we Demo's too
Idealistic - too
spiritual too
restless*

Yes, we Democrats are restless as well as argumentative. Yes, we are never content to let well enough alone, but are always restless to get on with the business of exploring new horizons.

We are restless because we know that America cannot stand still and continue to live. It can live
only if it grows. We are restless because we do not want

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to crop our size to the monuments of the national past.

We want to honor the monuments of the past by building

beyond them to an ever-expanding future.

↳ We are restless because we do not want to be
embalmed in the case of a ^{pol + economic} mummy. In Pharoah's Egypt

the whole of the national energy went into the worship

of death but America ~~is not such a nation.~~ We affirm ^{we} + proclaim

the goodness of life, and we want to spend our national

energy in liberating and purifying life from the

corrosive presence of fear, disease, want, ignorance

and intolerance.

↳ We are restless, because we are eager to redefine

America as being something more than just a giant plot

to make money. We affirm that our economic system can

provide a ^{decent} living wage, a proper education, and a decent

home for every American.

and at the same time
set an example for the whole
world -

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✓ We are eager to redefine our national purpose
in terms of something more than an ^{abq} IBM machine punching
holes in a soulless stack of cards. We affirm the
vitality of our constitutional principle of equality
and the right of every man, woman and child to human
dignity without regard to race, religion, or ancestry.

✓ We are restless because we reject the view that
good government is fulfilled merely by good administration,
or good bookkeeping. If that was all there was to good
government, then nobody should be allowed to stand for
public office except certified public accountants.

✓ But to us, as Democrats, with our roots deep in
the people, good administration is not a substitute for
good policies.

✓ We are restless for the same reason that Democrats
were restless in the years immediately preceding the

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election of Woodrow Wilson in 1912, and the election
of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. Both times, the
Republicans had held the control of the Executive for
a long stretch. Both times in that long stretch, we
had a government dedicated to the postponement and
evasion of solutions to urgent domestic and international
problems. Both times, the weight of executive energy
was bent to the end that things should stand still.

Care taken

But Democrats knew that an America which tries
to stand still, is an America that pronounces a sentence
of doom on itself. That is why in 1912 and in 1932, the
election of Democratic Presidents ushered in great
creative periods in our national life. Under Wilson and
again under Roosevelt, we at once leaped forward in a
new birth of freedom. Unlike what happened after the
change of Administrations in 1953, we didn't have to

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spend one, two, three, four, five, six, and now seven

years just studying problems. From the very day Wilson

and Roosevelt took their Inaugural oath, they were ready

with action programs based on hard study of problems

before and not ~~just~~ after they asked the people for the

trust of the Presidential office.

Today, once more, and for the same reason, we
are restless to get on with the programs we have already

formulated to serve America. We want this nation of ours

to breathe ^{deep} again. We are eager to be once more a people

on the move -- a people who voluntarily assume the yoke --

and the glory that goes with it -- of advancing mankind's

best hopes for justice and peace.

We were in times past, and in a very literal sense,

the giver and the protector of light in a sorely troubled

world. There is no reason why that should not be the case

(Power)
We Want to
Develop our
Resources,
Schools
help the
aged
encourage
Industry.
Aid depressed
areas
improve
Transport.

000743

right now. America still has tremendous, unsurpassed
resources in material, strength, in energy, and in
creative talents.

all that is needed is leadership -

*Purpose -
Inspiration*

Why then have we come to live with a bad taste
in our mouth -- with a sense that despite our material
comforts, we have no inner joy? Why then do we live
with fear in our eyes -- with the sense that tomorrow
may be the day of ~~the apocalypse~~ ^{War & Tragedy} Why then do we live
with shame in our hearts -- with the sense that
because of some self-inflicted wound, we have fallen
from the heights we once occupied?

out

This bad taste, this fear, this shame, all have
a common cause. The cause, dating from 1953, is the
infectious disease of ~~apathy~~ ^{apathy} and indifference
~~caught~~ ^{caught} from a breakdown in leadership at the very
summit of the nation.

out

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There may have been a time when the Presidency could serve as a place of dignified retirement ~~in one's~~ ~~old age.~~

There may have been a time when it could be awarded to a man as a sort of good conduct medal for performance in a lesser station.

~~There may have been a time when it was enough for a President to do nothing in particular but to do it very well -- like some ceremonial figure in an empty pageant of states.~~

There may have been a time when a President could put himself so far above politics as to become politically invisible or unapproachable.

There may have been a time when the Presidency could resolve itself into a long and tedious exercise in attitudes, platitudes and beatitudes -- to the

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exclusion of concrete action.

But if ever there was such a time, that time is
not now.

must be a
Now Now, the Presidency ~~is the~~ vital place of action --

the only staff and command post that can unite and give *the Nation*

direction and purpose *to three worlds.* One is the

divided world of our ^{our} government ~~proper~~. The second is

the larger world of the whole nation which encompasses

the world of our governmental machinery. And the third

is the still larger world beyond our shores -- a world

whose very survival may depend upon leadership from our

own White House.

(Democ Congress - what can it do)

The Congress cannot do the President's work for

him. Under modern conditions, the Congress can lay down

general policy lines. It can revise policies it receives

in draft form from the Executive. It can veto those policies.

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Or it can oversee the way they are executed by the President.

↳ But Congress cannot fill the Presidential vacuum.

If the President defaults on his role as a national and world leader, there is no force to fill that vacuum.

The Congress was not designed to be and cannot be the commander in chief of the armed forces, the chief initiator of foreign affairs, the head of government, the leader and interpreter of national and international public opinion.

↳ The Congress is built along Constitutional lines to give voice to local and regional ^{National} interests. It does not have the unified energy, ~~the staying power~~, and the operational powers to give momentum to the whole of the national effort, and to that of the free world besides.

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By the force of ^{our} ~~the~~ Constitution, and by inescapable historical necessity, those powers are vested in, and are meant to be exercised by the President in person -- though he is responsible to the Courts in his legal character, and to the Congress and the people in his political character. If he fails to exercise those powers, every aspect of our political life falls into disarray.

That is exactly what has happened to us ^{under this Republican} ~~of late~~ ^{Administration}

What has happened is the reverse side of the truth once voiced by Lord Acton that all power tends to corrupt and absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely. The reverse side is, that the absence of power or its non-exercise under urgent circumstances, can corrupt just as thoroughly. The ~~total~~ default of Presidential leadership is the greatest corrupting influence in our Nation today.

000748

Beaver Clark signed
he stopped at 5 hours -

What we have had of late, is a care-taker

government, a mark-time government, a do-as-you-can

sort of government, an artificial sun-lamp government --

a government spouting ^{cliques} ~~aphorisms~~ from Poor Richard's

Almanac, while the Communists are everywhere on the

march with their perverse zeal to remake the world in

their own image. What we have had is a government

whose first and last line of defense always is, that

it means well.

Means
well

Well, simply to "mean well" never was and is not

now good enough in the affairs of great nations. The

graveyard of history is crowded with the bones of

peoples who had good intentions but lacked the imagination,

the exact knowledge, and the driving energy that could

translate those good intentions into specific realities

in a formidable world.

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^ Nor is it good enough these days for a great
nation merely to wait for events to happen, and then
to react to them. A great nation must march at the
head of events, and by measures born of foresight,
produce the events it wants.

^ The Democratic party has absorbed this lesson
of history. That is why it is the oldest political
party, with the longest unbroken history of any political
party in the world today. For the same reason, that is
why it is an eternally young party, supercharged with
eagerness to release the giant powers of America for
greatness in building here at home and abroad. And again
for the same reason, that is why our party at critical
moments in American history has raised from its midst the
Presidential leadership that has sounded the call to action-
stations the nation was waiting to hear. It is waiting

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to hear that call right now. And our party is ready.

April 16, 1959

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Yes, we Democrats are restless as well as argumentative. Yes, we are never content to let well enough alone, but are always restless to get on with the business of exploring new horizons.

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We want to honor the monuments of the past by building beyond them to an ever-expanding future.

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We are restless, because we are eager to redefine America as being something more than just a giant plot to make money. We affirm that our economic system can provide a living wage, a proper education, and a decent home for every American.

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We are restless because we reject the view that good government is fulfilled merely by good administration, or good bookkeeping. If that was all there was to good government, then nobody should be allowed to stand for public office except certified public accountants.

But to us, as Democrats, with our roots deep in the people, good administration is not a substitute for good policies.

We are restless for the same reason that Democrats were restless in the years immediately preceding the

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But Democrats knew that an America which tries to stand still, is an America that pronounces a sentence of doom on itself. That is why in 1912 and in 1932, the election of Democratic Presidents ushered in great creative periods in our national life. Under Wilson and again under Roosevelt, we at once leaped forward in a new birth of freedom. Unlike what happened after the change of Administrations in 1953, we didn't have to

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spend one, two, three, four, five, six, and now seven

years just studying problems. From the very day Wilson and Roosevelt took their Inaugural oath, they were ready with action programs based on hard study of problems before and not just after they asked the people for the trust of the Presidential office.

Today, once more, and for the same reason, we are restless to get on with the programs we have already formulated to serve America. We want this nation of ours to breathe again. We are eager to be once more a people on the move -- a people who voluntarily assume the yoke -- and the glory that goes with it -- of advancing mankind's best hopes for justice and peace.

We were in times past, and in a very literal sense, the giver and the protector of light in a sorely troubled world. There is no reason why that should not be the case

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right now. America still has tremendous, unsurpassed resources in material, strength, in energy, and in creative talents.

Why then have we come to live with a bad taste in our mouth -- with a sense that despite our material comforts, we have no inner joy? Why then do we live with fear in our eyes -- with the sense that tomorrow may be the day of the apocalypse? Why then do we live with shame in our hearts -- with the sense that because of some self-inflicted wound, we have fallen from the heights we once occupied?

This bad taste, this fear, this shame, all have a common cause. The cause, dating from 1953, is the infectious disease of slothfulness and indifference caught from a breakdown in leadership at the very summit of the nation.

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There may have been a time when the Presidency could serve as a place of dignified retirement in one's old age.

There may have been a time when it could be awarded to a man as a sort of good conduct medal for performance in a lesser station.

There may have been a time when it was enough for a President to do nothing in particular but to do it very well -- like some ceremonial figure in an empty pageant of states.

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