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HUMPHREY FOR PRESIDENT COMMITTEE
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FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1960

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
Before the Western Suburban and Kensington-Wheaton Democratic
Clubs of Montgomery County, Maryland - February 17, 1960
Indian Spring Country Club, Glenmont, Md.

Mr. Chairman and fellow-residents of Montgomery County - this may look like a Minnesota reunion here tonight. Indeed it is, for I'm delighted to see a Minnesota boy who has made good - your able young Congressman, John R. Foley. He has already made an outstanding record in his first term, and I know that you'll send him back to Congress in November.

I want to talk to you this evening about the subject that's closest to all our hearts - winning the world-wide struggle for peace and freedom. And I want to concentrate on the part our Federal government could and should play in this struggle, and that it hasn't played for the last seven years.

Last week a visitor to Washington said that our problem today concerned "not only the thrust of our rockets but the thrust of our ideas."

Now, I was struck by that, not only because it was a good phrase, but because of the man who said it. It was Emmet J. Hughes, the best speech-writer the President ever had. And he went on to say that the military lag of the United States has been "matched or excelled" by a long lapse in political intelligence and purpose.

This particular Presidential ghost writer walked out of the White House in disgust - because, while he could put words into the President's mouth, he couldn't get any ideas past the palace guard.

Why have we been able to get so few satellites and so few ideas off the ground? It's not for lack of enterprise and imagination in Americans - we're bursting with them. It's not for lack of drive and initiative on the part of our public servants. Although many able men and women have been forced out or resigned in frustration, many remain - some, indeed, whom I value as friends and neighbors here in the County.

It took almost as many years for the Administration to recognize the importance of having some goals for America -- some purposes in the world -- and a year more to set up a Commission to help find out what they are.

I happen to believe that one of the most promising roads to peace lies through disarmament. Recognizing that the Soviet leaders are dedicated Communists, I believe that they are also intelligent and prudent men. I think there is a mutual interest on which we can base negotiations with them - our mutual interest in avoiding mutual annihilation.

As Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Disarmament, I have for years been prodding and pushing this Administration to take the subject seriously. Yet, last September, this Administration was caught flatfooted by Chairman Khrushchev's UN General Assembly speech, proposing universal disarmament. We have been negotiating for many months over the test ban in Geneva. Yet we have stunted and neglected the scientific studies needed to clarify and fortify our position there.

There was a time - and many of you here can remember it - when the air of Washington crackled with ideas. But, since 1953, we seem to have fallen into a deep and almost dreamless sleep. Even the Sputniks criss-crossing our skies hardly disturb the Administration's slumbers. There is some talk of the need for a real effort to improve our education system, with its over-crowded schools and underpaid teachers. But then they suddenly discover that this might mean some positive action by the Federal Government -- and some spending -- and back they fall into slumberland.

The fact is that there are more than enough good ideas inside and outside the government to transform our position in the world - if there were the imagination to grasp them and the will to carry them out. But this Administration doesn't solve problems - or even tackle them. If they are recognized, they are swept under the rug, or into some Commission which will report next year, sometime, or never. It doesn't really matter, because nothing is done about the report, anyhow.

The Republicans talk as if we Democrats have let the Russians in on some secret when we lay these facts on the line. They may be "classified" to Americans but they aren't to the Russians. Only last week, Secretary of State Herter admitted at his press conference that the hardening of the Soviet position over Berlin was due to their confidence that their strength, relative to ours, was growing.

We cannot, in fact, win the peace when we are only half trying. We need to put zest and zeal and a sense of high purpose back into our government. We need, as the President's own speech-writer has told us, "the thrust of our ideas."

I have asked many thoughtful observers how they assessed the total significance of Chairman Khrushchev's visit last year. They summed it up for me in three words:

"Wake up, America!"

Someone needs to blow the bugle, arouse the sleeping giant. That is exactly what I am trying to do, as I travel and speak throughout the country. Like many of you here, I am aspiring to promotion in the government service.

If I win, I promise you that the big sleep will be over, and our government will be alive and stirring again. Public service will be more than a job - it will be a career with dedication and purpose, and with constantly enlarging horizons.

The poet Archibald MacLeish has told us that "America has promises." The time has come to revive those promises - and to fulfill them.

America need not be a tired and drowsy nation, clinging to the past. It was once, and it can be again, a mighty force for progress in a world longing for leadership.

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Excerpts from Speech by
Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey
Indian Springs Country Club
Montgomery County, Virginia

17 Feb. 1960

Leo McLauren

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our public servants. Although many able men and women

have been forced out or resigned in frustration, many remain,

some, indeed, whom I value as friends and neighbors here

in the County.

The trouble is at the top. The men there - including the President himself - have never really grasped the power of positive government. They came in determined to dismantle as much government as possible. They haven't quite wrecked the machine, but they have brought it to a virtual standstill.

Never
Grasped
Positive
Government.

Our government is no longer even a good employer.

Salaries and benefits have lagged far behind those in private enterprise. It's for this reason that I've given my enthusiastic support to the Morrison Bill and similar bills

Salaries &
Benefits.

aimed at reducing the gap between public and private salaries. I understand it's been called a "crusade for economic equality" and I'm glad to enroll in it.

I was happy last year to help enact the Hospitalization Measure for government employees - and I have joined my esteemed colleague from Oregon, Senator Neuberger, in introducing a bill to extend similar benefits to retired civil servants.

Salaries and benefits are important - but there are intangibles which, I know, are just as important to our best public servants. They want the opportunity to do the most creative and challenging work of which they are capable. They want to feel again the crusading spirit of government in the 1930's. And they want to enjoy the confidence and respect of their fellow-citizens.

I needn't remind you of the sorry and sordid years of
McCarthyism -- Vice President Nixon has already contrived to
do that. He's called the well-founded criticisms we
Democrats have been making of our defense posture a "numbers
game." It reminds us all to vividly of the "numbers game"
he played for political advantage at the expense of the
good name of our civil service. ||

Look
who's
talking
Rear Boat
Hopper
lecturing on
Evils of
Draw Poker!

Even if this sad old song had altogether ended -
and it hasn't - the "malady lingers on. It permeates our
government, at home and abroad. No one knows how many
imaginative proposals are not being made, how many bold
initiatives not being taken, because of the fear of some
future witch-hunt.

Timid government, half-hearted government, "don't
do anything if you can help it" government - this just isn't

good enough to compete in today's world. No ideas bubble up
through the soggy dough of this Administration. There
are no bold new ventures like Lend-Lease, the Marshall Plan,
Point Four, - which gained and held the world initiative for
us throughout the Democratic years.

Instead, we dilly and we dally. Even when the
Administration pulls itself together and decides to do
something, it limps along far behind events. It took
seven years for the Administration to discover the vital
importance to us of India's success - and even now what
it proposes is utterly inadequate to the need and the
opportunity. It took almost as many years for the Administration
to recognize the importance of having some goals (for America),
some purposes in the world - and a year more to set up a
Commission to help find out what they are.

India

Goals

I happen to believe that one of the most promising roads to peace lies through disarmament. Recognizing that the Soviet leaders are dedicated Communists, I believe that they are also intelligent and prudent men. I think there is a mutual interest on which we can base negotiations with them - our mutual interest in avoiding mutual annihilation.

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