

EXCERPTS OF REMARKS BY
SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL STAFF CONFERENCE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS

SHERATON-PARK
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 7, 1963

I am proud to address this conference.

The International Association of Machinists
is one of the finest examples of trade unionism in
the nation and world today.

You and your members have built and continue
to strengthen a progressive and effective trade union.

But you are not just union members and leaders.

You are citizens of this Nation, and you show it by
your work and leadership for programs which strengthen
this Nation and increase the opportunities for our
people.

I have told my colleagues in the Senate and

Effective
Union

+

Citizen

audiences throughout this country that the International Association of Machinists represents a noble example of responsible and organized citizenship in action.

You are an important force in this Nation's public life and the shaping of our public policies.

Your ^{action} ~~force~~ and your responsible influence are needed, today more than ever.

Today the progress and strength of this Nation are being threatened by the static and roar of the radical right. The fringes of fear in this nation are not strong in numbers. Those who seek to rewrite the past, are afraid of the present and overwhelmed by the future ^{They} are not powerful forces in our society.

Their ^{impact} ~~effect~~ is the effect of noise. It is confusing. It is disruptive. It is divisive.

Your voice, representing a powerful, responsible force for progress, must be heard throughout the land. It must be heard by Congress---today, next week, next month and every month for as long as this nation ~~still~~ has basic human and social problems which are unsolved.

 / Congress must hear your voice, and the voices of the other forces for good which are already organized in this country. And I commend you as an example of vocal and effective citizenship which more of our progressive unions, associations and other groups should follow.

Let me be blunt for a moment. I believe this Nation has moved ahead in the past two years, that we have made real progress domestically and internationally. But we have not moved far enough, or fast enough

in light of the critical and pressing needs and challenges we face at home and internationally.

I'm a patient man. Anyone who serves in the United States Congress and strives to win Congressional approval for his programs must be. I had to be patient for five years before my proposals for a Food for Peace program were enacted. I had to be patient for eight years before my suggestions to preserve some of our wilderness areas passed the Senate. I had to be patient for two years before my legislation to establish the Peace Corps was passed. I had to be patient for ^{four}~~two~~ years before Congress enacted my bill to establish an Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

The patience is often rewarded. In the last Congress, we won victory for the Area Redevelopment

Read

program, an accelerated public works program, an
increase of the minimum wage, a manpower training
program, a liberalization of social security bene-
fits, a revision of public welfare programs, the
most comprehensive housing program in our history,
the water pollution control program, the Trade Ex-
pansion Act, the Alliance for Progress, expansion of
the Food for Peace program and approval of the United
Nations Bond Issue.

These, in addition to victory for my Peace
Corps and Arms Control Agency proposals and others,
were the rewards for persistence and hard work in the
87th Congress.

The 88th Congress has moved ahead on other
major programs. The Senate has approved my Youth
Employment Act, the mass transit bill, and the Wilderness

Bill; the House has already acted favorably on the medical education bill and extension of the successful feed grains program *for our agriculture*

We have moved ahead in the past two and a half years, thanks in part to your efforts, your work and your help.

But we have a long way to go---this year, next year and in this decade.

Unemployment remains our number one domestic problem. It is a critical problem in itself, and it represents an economy which is not growing at a rate necessary to meet the needs of our people and the international responsibilities of our Nation.

I can not be patient with the fact that five million citizens can not find jobs. None of us can or should be. And the public official who

quotes abstract statistical theories to justify
an unemployment rate of almost six per cent should
be voted or kicked out of office.

Unemp

Statistics and theories do not help an un-
employed man pay the rent or feed his children.

I have heard enough talk about the idea that
this nation will always have a "hard core" of about
five per cent unemployed. And I don't buy it.

I want action this year by Congress to help
the economy move forward and thus reduce unemployment.
And the key program on which Congress must act to
achieve that purpose is the Administration's tax
reduction proposal.

There are other pressing and critical needs
of this country about which I find my patience
running thin.

I can not be patient about the fact that so

many of our older citizens face fear and poverty
because of staggering medical bills. I want action
on the Administration's hospital insurance program
under Social Security.

Medicare

I can not be patient about the fact that our
children often must be jammed into overcrowded class-
rooms manned by underpaid teachers. I want action
on the bill for Federal aid to education.

School

I can not be patient about the indifferent
way in which so many of our mentally ill people
are treated. I want action on legislation for
community mental health centers and for mental
retardation centers.

mentally
ill.

And I do not ask you to be patient. It is
true that Congress usually gets off to a relatively

slow start each year, and this year is no exception.

It is true that the real flow of major legislation usually comes in the later months of the session, and this year will be no exception.

But it is also true that we face stiff opposition to the major programs of progress which must be established to strengthen America's position internationally and to increase opportunities for our people at home.

We need your continuing efforts and the constant expression of your responsible voice to win victories for these programs.

There are stumbling blocks in Congress which halt progress in major legislation. There are men in Congress who are masters of negative tactics of delay. There are structural barriers in Congress which tend to favor the forces of reaction and stagnation

Repub
Opposition
negative
negging
Fall
Finders

no
Prog
no
Anti

over the forces of innovation and progress.

But ultimately, Congress will act when the people want it to act. And Congress will know the wishes and the demands of the people only when they speak out---clearly, forcefully, and constantly.

That is your job---to help give voice to the wishes and the demands of the people for progress.

(END)



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org