

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS AT DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE RECEPTION

BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

September 17, 1969

Let me remind us all of that big truth in politics -- you cannot govern if you cannot win elections. And I submit that a party divided against itself is neither going to win elections nor be the governing party.

I say. Let us put an end to looking backwards, to recriminations, to blame laying, to the endless squabbling. It is time to seek common cause, to find the common ground on which this great party may stand and contest for the right to govern the 50 states and the United States.

For the moment -- even with a majority in the Congress -- we are the minority in government -- in the White House, in the state houses. We are technically the party of the loyal opposition. But the great tradition of the Democratic Party is not to oppose, but to propose, not to take the negative, but to press forward with affirmative action, not to criticize, but to advocate.

Yes, we have the duty to oppose when the party in power makes proposals or sends up nominations for high office which are not worthy of a major party. Yes, we have the responsibility to question the questionable acts and policies of a Republican Administration. But, above all, we have the mission to look ahead. When we are out of power, the Republicans have the immediate tasks of governing. But we Democrats have the continuing task of proposing for the future. That is our principle mission.

Our best minds must be used to educate the public and to focus public opinion on the massive problems to be solved not only this year but over the years of the coming decade. The Democratic Party Policy Council is being created to fulfill this purpose. In this spirit the Policy Council will explore and extend the frontier of ideas that will contribute to building a more just and free society and a more stable and peaceful world -- ideas that will become an agenda of Democratic issues for the decade of the 1970's and, more immediately, will help build a climate of public opinion conducive to Democratic victories at the local, state and national elections of 1970 and 1972.

While Vietnam, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East must absorb much of the President's time and energy, let us remember that the overriding problem of peace is that of limiting strategic nuclear arms, of seeking a worldwide safe-guarded arms control agreement.

We must focus, too, on the broad problem of raising living standards for the poor of the world -- as well as the poor of the United States. And there can be only temporary peace, domestically and internationally, in the presence of wretched poverty.

We must never forget that our party has centered its philosophy on the word "opportunity." And the two operative words that describe opportunity in America are "education" and "non-discrimination."

Yet in the pursuit of opportunity for all our citizens, we cannot condone, support, nor reward the use of violence to achieve a faster pace of reform. The Democratic Party must stand squarely for the principles of non-violence, of law observance and law enforcement.

Finally, we must concentrate on the health of our people, on the conquest of disease, and the elimination of the pollution of air and water that threatens us all, rich and poor alike.

Peace, the raising of living standards, opportunity, health, law observance -- here are 5 areas in which we must concentrate our efforts as a party, where we can forge a common purpose.

We must show the American people, if they are again to place their confidence in the Democratic Party, that we are capable of taking a coherent, sensible, practical, and yet humanistic course.

I know that the men and women who are gathered here this evening can and will do precisely that.

000909
DNC RECEPTION -- WASHINGTON, D. C.

SEPTEMBER 17, 1969

Win Let me remind us all of that big truth in politics --
you cannot govern if you cannot win elections. */* And

Security I submit that a party divided against itself is neither
going to win elections nor be the governing party. *o*

000910

2

I say: Let us put an end to looking backwards,
to recreminations, to blame laying, to the endless
squabbling. */* It is time to seek common cause,
to find the common ground on which this great party
may stand and contest for the right to govern the
50 states and the United States. *o*

*Seek
Common
Cause.*

For the moment -- even with a majority in the Congress -- we are the minority in government -- in the White House, in the state houses. We are, technically, the party of the loyal opposition.

Proposed But the great tradition of the Democratic Party is not to oppose, but to propose, not to take the negative, but to press forward with affirmative action.

not to criticize, but to advocate.

Yes, we have the duty to oppose when the party in power makes proposals, or sends up nominations for high office which are not worthy of a major party.

Yes, we have the responsibility to question the questionable acts and policies of a Republican Administration.

000913

Look Ahead

5

But, above all, we have the mission to look ahead.

↳ When we are out of power, the Republicans have the immediate tasks of governing. But we Democrats have the continuing task of proposing for the future.

↳ That is our principle mission.

000914

6

↳ Our best minds must be used to educate the public and to focus public opinion on the massive problems to be solved not only this year but over the years of the coming decade.

↳ The Democratic Party Policy Council is being created to fulfill this purpose.

Policy Council

✓ In this spirit the Policy Council will explore and extend the frontier of ideas that will contribute to building a more just and free society and a more stable and peaceful world -- ideas that will become an agenda of Democratic issues for the decade of the 1970's and,

more immediately, will help build a climate of public opinion conducive to Democratic victories at the local, state and national elections of 1970 and 1972.

✓ While Vietnam, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East must absorb much of the President's time and energy,

*arms
control*

Let us remember that the overriding problem of peace
is that of limiting strategic nuclear arms, of seeking
a worldwide safeguarded arms control agreement.

↳ We must focus, too, on the broad problem of
raising living standards for the poor of the world --
as well as the poor of the United States.

where constant Poverty, there is no Peace

And there can be ~~only temporary~~ ^{no} peace, domestically
and internationally, in the presence of wretched
poverty.

↳ We must never forget that our party has
centered its philosophy on the word "opportunity."

And the two operative words that describe opportunity in America are "education" and "non-discrimination."

↳ Yet in the pursuit of opportunity for all our citizens, we cannot condone, support, nor reward the use of violence to achieve a faster pace of reform.

The Democratic Party must stand squarely for the principles of non-violence, of law observance and law enforcement.

↳ Finally, we must concentrate on the health of our people, on the conquest of disease, and the elimination of the pollution of air and water that threatens us all, rich and poor alike.

*Physical
Sickness*

Peace, the raising of living standards,
~~Education - Non Discrimination Physical Development~~
opportunity, health, law observance -- here are
 the areas in which we must concentrate our efforts
 as a party, where we can forge a common purpose.

We must show the American people, if they are
 again to place their confidence in the Democratic Party,

that we are capable of taking a coherent, sensible,
practical, and yet humanistic course.

I know that the men and women who are
 gathered here this evening can and will do precisely
 that.

#



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