

STATEMENT BY
THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

HEARINGS BY THE
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PRIORITIES,
THE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COUNCIL,
U. S. SENATE,

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As Chairman of the Democratic Policy Council, I want to express my appreciation to the many Democratic Senators who will participate in these hearings and to the members of the Policy Council's Committee on National Priorities who will hear this testimony.

The Democratic Policy Council, an instrumentality of the Democratic National Committee, is charged with developing an agenda of critical issues for the 1970's. The first step in this process was taken on February 9 when the Policy Council adopted a comprehensive statement, America in the 1970's.

In the section of the statement dealing with national priorities, the Policy Council declared: "... It is to the Congress

to which the American people must increasingly look for leadership in determining our national priorities and committing the resources — human and financial — to meet our urgent domestic needs. "

For this reason, the first public hearings by the Policy Council's Committee on National Priorities are being held on Capitol Hill.

We must look to the Congress for leadership because the performance of the Republican Administration demonstrates its refusal or incapacity to secure the decisive shift of resources which our present circumstances so urgently require. This fact was established most graphically by President Nixon's decision to veto as inflationary legislation providing a modest increase in Federal expenditures for education and health and, in the same week, his announcement of a new multi-billion spiral in the nuclear arms race.

More recently we have heard renewed threats of another Presidential veto of HEW funds while the Secretary of Defense advocates simultaneously a further expansion of the Safeguard ABM system.

We have, in sum, a national administration highly skilled in public relations and television packaging, but demonstrably unwilling to come to grips with the demands and opportunities of the 1970's.

As the Democratic Policy Council stated two weeks ago: "We believe the American people are capable of facing America's problems for what they are. We believe they are willing to initiate and sustain tangible efforts to meet these problems."

Because of this belief we are going to speak out—clearly, specifically, and repeatedly—about the goals and purposes that should characterize our national life in this decade.

I am confident that these two days of hearing on the issue of national priorities will be immensely valuable to this Committee, to the Democratic Policy Council, and most importantly, to the American people.



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