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ADDRESS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (D, MINN.)
BEFORE THE CIVIL LIBERTIES CLEARING HOUSE DINNER, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 1949

"Civil rights is increasingly becoming a reality in American life,"

declared Senator Hubert H. Humphrey in a speech before the Civil Liberties Clearing House in Washington, D. C. "It is a reality," he said, "because the American people on a local and state level and through their own civic organizations are rapidly shaping their communities in a manner consistent with the aims of civil rights legislation. The development of municipal and state FEPC laws, the growth of local councils on human relations, the increasing awareness on college campuses and in fraternities and in sororities that discrimination is inconsistent with American ideals, the many serious projects undertaken by church groups over all the country to create better understanding and to put religious principles of human equality into practice, the manner in which the problem is being intelligently discussed all over the levels of our society - all these are proof of the fact that the American people are ready and are undertaking the task of placing civil rights and human rights side by side as an essential part of their lives."

Senator Humphrey pointed to the recent history of Congressional debate on civil rights as proof of his contention. "Not so many years ago," he said, "opponents of civil rights legislation would frequently allude on the floor of the Senate and of the House disparagingly to members of minority races." In the recent debate concerning civil rights on the floor of the Senate, however, he noted "Speech after speech was made on the floor, even by those opposed to civil rights legislation, paying tribute to the high qualities, integrity, ability and high performance of Negroes and other minority groups. The argument against

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We need Civil Rts Laws

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Civil Rts Act 9/1949

Level Rts Commission

Section in
Legislation

Interstate
Travel

Joint
Cong Comm

Tightening
up statutes
& decisions

Be
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United Action

①
Liberation
Lack Spirit
Military

Dem Party
can't ignore
its Rep.

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Good Signs

Home Rule

Fed Aid

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FEPC

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civil rights on the floor of the Senate was not that Negroes were undeserving of being recognized as equals, but rather that each of the states are doing a sufficient and satisfactory job protecting the rights of all citizens within their communities. This is indeed noteworthy progress; this is indeed remarkable evidence that my firm conviction that complete civil rights is about to come, and that national civil rights legislation is inevitable."

Senator Humphrey criticized the Republican Party for playing politics in the early days of the session with attempts to change the rules of the Senate to prevent filibuster. He sharply criticized the Wherry resolution as a "manoeuvre to defeat civil rights by playing politics at the expense of the best interests of the American people. Those of the Democratic Party pledged themselves to pass civil rights legislation," he said, "and voted in a manner consistent with that pledge. The vast majority of Republicans, however, in spite of their pledges in behalf of civil rights legislation, voted to defeat it."

Senator Humphrey declared that the Administration would continue to press forward to test the Wherry resolution to pass an anti-poll tax law, anti-lynching, and fair employment practice commission legislation. He praised the McGrath Civil Rights Bill as a very statesmanlike and intelligent proposal, free of emotion. He also urged the creation of a Civil Rights Commission to continue to investigate violation of civil rights in America and recommend further legislation.

In a final declaration he warned that the future of the Democratic Party is intimately linked with its dedication and devotion of its energies on behalf of civil rights legislation, and the "liberal idea." "The Democratic Party is the liberal party in America. As such, it has the support of the American people. Should there ever be any question about our party's dedication to liberal principles, our party's claim for support of the American people will fail."



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