

MINNESOTA RADIO TAPE FOR APRIL 22, 1964

FOR BROADCAST WEEK OF APRIL 26, 1964

Ladies and gentlemen. . .

This is Senator Hubert Humphrey, speaking to you from my office on  
Capitol Hill in Washington . . .

Today I want to report on a sample of the mail I have received  
from school children in Minnesota, who have written to me about Civil Rights.  
These letters represent boys and girls, and all school grades from the fourth  
grade up through High School. I am deeply impressed by the~~ir~~ quality and  
quantity of these letters. I am constantly amazed and reassured by the  
simple clarity and directness with which these young people go to the heart  
of the central issues. This speaks well for these young people. It speaks  
well for their parents, their teachers, their schools. It is deeply reassuring  
for the future of our state and nation.

But let me share with you some of these letters.

Deanna Dowdle is in the 4th grade of Nelson School in Minneapolis.

She states the issues of fair play and equality. Deanna writes: "I hope the Civil Rights Bill is passed. . .I think the Negroes should be treated fairly . . .They should be treated equally."

One hundred and eighty-eight years after our Declaration of Independence which says that "all men are created equal" it may seem strange that some Americans ask why other Americans should be treated as equals. Cynthia Kinning, in the 9th grade of Archbishop Murray Memorial High School in St. Paul has a simple, convincing answer. She writes: "I am all for the Civil Rights Bill because I believe the Negro is a human being just as well as whites are and should be treated with equal liberties. They have feelings; they have families; they are just the same as we are--normal people".

Equality, fair play, humanity--these are themes which come out in many letters. Some young people focus these themes on our character as a nation and what meaning America has in the international community of nations. Pamela Gillette, a high school student from St. Paul concentrates on this area. "I am strongly behind the bill" says Pamela, "and feel that the integrity of our nation is at stake if this bill is not passed in its entirety. Not only is this bill a moral issue, but it may also decide our standing on international matters. How can we possibly win the admiration of borderline

nations and save them from the threat of Communism when we don't even treat our own fellow citizens with the respect due to every human being? We are not living up to the Constitution our forefathers gave their lives for."

Judy Olson, of Minneapolis carries the issue out to the responsibilities of the United States to lead the world in the cause of peace. Judy says "So many other countries look up on the United States as being such a great nation. . . . How can we help strive for a united and peaceful world when we can't even have it in our own country?"

But Judy makes another very important point, *on understanding.* She knows some people who do not agree with her. She has asked them why. The answer given, she writes, is that "I was too young to understand". "I am 15" she continues, "and I am certainly old enough to realize and understand the problem we have today".

These young people understand very well, as proved by the fact that they can say what they mean and give reasons. The person who can't or won't give reasons is the one I suspect of misunderstanding.

Norbert Dorsch, an 8th grade student in St. Joseph, Minnesota, gets to a final problem in the Civil Rights Bill, that of reaching a decision after all of the reasons have been given. Norbert says simply that the Senate should not have to talk so long. He asks: "Please do all you can to get this bill

passed soon".

To Norbert and the many others who have written to me with the same request, I promise to do everything I can to bring the Civil Rights Bill to decision without delay. To the other writers I have mentioned and the many others who have written with equal clarity on the same points, I want to say that I have been invigorated, refreshed, and inspired by all of you. I value your letters and I am grateful for them.

Thank you.

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Ladies and Gentlemen . . .

This is Senator Hubert Humphrey speaking to you from  
my office on Capitol Hill in Washington . . .

I want to report to you today on an inspiring and  
refreshing aspect of our civil rights debate in the Senate . . .  
the mail I've been receiving on this subject from Minnesota  
school children. It's been coming from boys and girls in all  
grades from fourth through high school.

I am constantly amazed and reassured by the clarity and  
directness with which these young people go to the heart of this  
civil rights problem. This speaks well for them--and for their  
parents, teachers and schools. It is deeply reassuring for the  
future of Minnesota and the nation.

One of the best letters came from Deanna Dowdle, a 4th grader at Nelson School in Minneapolis. Here are some thoughts from her nice letter--"I hope the civil rights bill is passed . . . I think the Negroes should be treated fairly . . . they should be treated equally." Deanna does a fine job here of stating the issues of fair play and equality.

Our Declaration of Independence--which says that all men are created equal--was signed 188 years ago. Yet some Americans are still asking why other Americans should be treated as equals.

A thoughtful letter from Cynthia Kinning, a 9th grader at Archbishop Murray Memorial High School in St. Paul, gives a simple, convincing answer. Let me read a paragraph from Cynthia's letter . . .

"I am all for the civil rights bill because I believe the Negro is a human being just as well as whites are and should be treated with equal liberties. They have feelings; they have families; they are just the same as we are--normal people."

Some of these young letter writers discuss the themes of equality, fair play and humanity as they reflect on the meaning of America in our international community. One of the best was written by Pamela Gillette, a high school student from St. Paul. Here are some of her thoughts . . .

"I am strongly behind the bill and feel that the integrity of our nation is at stake if this bill is not passed in its entirety. Not only is this bill a moral issue, but it may also decide our standing on international matters. How can we possibly win the admiration of borderline nations--and save them from the threat of communism--when we don't even treat our own fellow citizens with the respect due to every human being?"

Another letter dealing with this point came from Judy Olson of Minneapolis, who writes that failure to guarantee equal rights for all our citizens hampers our efforts to lead the world in the cause of peace.



"So many other countries look up to the United States as being such a great nation"--she writes--"How can we help strive for a united and peaceful world when we can't even have it in our own country?"

Judy also writes that she is often told by those who don't agree with her civil rights views that she is too young to understand. "I am 15," she continues, "and I am certainly old enough to realize and understand the problem we have today."

These young people understand very well--the letters I receive show that they think clearly enough to say what they mean and give good reasons to back up their opinions.

A letter from Norbert Dorsch, who is in the 8th grade in St. Joseph, Minnesota, deals with another big civil rights problem. Norbert says simply that the Senate should not have to talk so long.



To Norbert and the other young people from Minnesota  
who have taken the time to write me--I promise that I'll do  
everything I can to speed up the Senate debate. To these  
writers and all the others who have written thoughtful letters  
to me about this bill . . . I want to say that you have given  
me both inspiration and encouragement. I value your letters  
and I am grateful to you all.      Thank you.



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