

From: Franz Allina - Martin Grove
Radio Press International
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For Release: Monday, August 3, 1964

SENATOR HUMPHREY ENDORSED AS DEMOCRATS'
"BEST" VICE PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE BY SENATOR
PROXMIRE (D-WIS.) ON RPI'S "FROM THE PEOPLE"

Reveals Some Big-Businessmen Will Cross Over
From G.O.P. To Vote For Lyndon Johnson

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 3 -- Endorsement for Senator Hubert Humphrey (D-Minn.) as "the best" choice for the second slot on the Democratic ticket this November came last night from Senator William Proxmire (D-Wis.).

The Wisconsin Senator cited Mr. Humphrey's "superlative understanding of international affairs" on Radio Press International's "From the People" radio program. Although he also singled out Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy as being "very well qualified" for the Vice Presidential post, he noted that "my own inclination is to say that Senator Humphrey is the best" choice at this time.

"I think Senator Humphrey would be an exciting President as well as a fine Vice President," Mr. Proxmire declared. "We've rarely had a Senator who would have such a masterful appreciation and understanding and eloquence in so many different fields as Mr. Humphrey," he asserted.

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Without mentioning names, Mr. Proxmire revealed that "a number of Senators have told me that in their states...there are a number of prominent, very responsible and sensitive big-businessmen who are coming over to vote for Lyndon Johnson." He said this "is especially true...in the South."

"It's very conceivable that a state like Wisconsin which has gone Republican quite steadily and consistently and has not gone Democratic in a Presidential election since 1948 will go Republican this year and go for Goldwater," Senator Proxmire pointed out. Among the factors he mentioned that might bring this about are the Arizona Senator's "enthusiastic supporters, the strong organization, the very big financing that he'll have, and the obvious concern that many people still have about the results of the Civil Rights Bill."

-RPI-

ATTACHED ARE EXCERPTS FROM SENATOR PROXMIRE'S APPEARANCE ON RADIO PRESS INTERNATIONAL'S "FROM THE PEOPLE." PLEASE CREDIT RPI IN ANY STORIES BASED ON THE SENATOR'S COMMENTS.

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E X C E R P T S

Radio Press International's "From the People"

Broadcast: Sunday, August 2, 1964 on RPI stations across
the country.

Guest: Senator William Proxmire (D-Wis.)

Panel: Herb Brubaker, Chief of RPI's Washington Bureau;
Alfred Bond, Washington Correspondent, Madison (Wis.)
Capital Times.

Moderator: RPI's Harry Clarkson.

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BRUBAKER: Senator Proxmire, do you believe the wrong choice of running-mate could possibly spell defeat for President Johnson this November?

PROXMIRE: It's very difficult to say. I think that if it's a close election the Vice Presidency could (make a difference). There have been very few elections, if any, in which the selection of the Vice President has meant the difference between victory and defeat. I think it's very possible that in 1960 the selection of Lyndon Johnson insured the election of President Kennedy. It was a very close election, as you recall. Texas was one of the pivotal states. Texas went for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket. And I think there may have been some other instances, but this is rare.

BRUBAKER: As a counter to Barry Goldwater's so-called Southern strategy would you suggest that in a Northern strategy the Democratic Administration might choose somebody like Bobby Kennedy as its Vice Presidential candidate?

PROXMIRE: I think Bobby Kennedy would make an excellent Vice President. I think he'd make a fine President. He has a superlative record in many ways in government. But I would want to emphasize that I think President Johnson should not select a Vice Presidential candidate on the basis of any political considerations at all. He doesn't have to. It is very important that he select a man who he thinks is best qualified to serve as President of the United States. I think that this will be the best politics....

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BRUBAKER: Is Bobby Kennedy the best man to fill the Vice Presidential position in your opinion?

PROXMIRE: I said Bobby Kennedy is very well qualified. I would certainly not say that any one man is necessarily the best. My own inclination is to say that Senator Humphrey is the best. I know Senator Humphrey better than anyone else (being mentioned as a possible Vice Presidential Candidate). I greatly admire him. I think he has a superlative understanding of international affairs. He served on the Foreign Relations Committee with great distinction. He's managed many bills on the floor relating to foreign policy. He's also managed a number of farm bills, and other bills relating to taxation. We've rarely had a Senator who would have such a masterful appreciation and understanding and eloquence in so many different fields. I think he'd be an exciting President of the United States as well as a fine Vice President....

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BRUBAKER: Is there any indication that big-businessman like Henry Ford are swinging over to the Johnson Camp this year?

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PROXMIRE: Yes, I think there is. I can't give you any names, of course, but a number of Senators have told me that in their states -- and I think it's true in Wisconsin -- the surprising thing is that whereas there are some Democrats who are going over to vote for Goldwater on the Civil Rights issue, there are a number of prominent, very responsible and sensitive big-businessmen who are coming over to vote for Lyndon Johnson. This is especially true, I understand, in the South. A number of Southern Senators have told me this.

* * *

BRUBAKER: You've told us you fear that Barry Goldwater will get in Wisconsin some of the votes given to Governor Wallace in this Spring's primary election. Do you believe there will be enough of these and, possibly, other votes to give Senator Goldwater a victory in your state?

PROXMIRE: ...I think that there's a chance, given Goldwater's enthusiastic supporters, the strong organization, the very big financing that he'll have, and the obvious concern that many people still have about the results of the Civil Rights Bill. It's very conceivable that a state like Wisconsin which has gone Republican quite steadily and consistently and has not gone Democratic in a Presidential election since 1948 will go Republican this year and go for Goldwater.

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