



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

MONDAY AM'S

### VICE PRESIDENT SAYS CIVIL DISORDERS COMMISSION MADE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Vice President Humphrey today commended members of the National Advisory Commission for making "a major contribution toward finding workable solutions to the critical problems which lay behind last summer's disorders."

In his prepared remarks for delivery before the 1968 Triennial Convention of B'nai B'rith Women on ~~Monday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup>, March 24, the Vice President said the Commission's report clearly indicated how far this country must go "to complete the integration of Negro, Spanish surnamed, and Indian citizens into American society."

The Vice President pointed to the Commission's assertion that there is a movement toward separate black and white societies.

"But this is only part of the picture," the Vice President said, "and I do not believe it is the main part. Separatism in America today is a minority movement, led by white and black extremists who can take advantage of current frustrations but do not speak for the bulk of Americans, black or white.

"Separatism is the backwash of the past, not the wave of the future," the Vice President said. "The main part of the picture is a determination in our nation to build a single society with common opportunities for all. The momentum toward



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

PAGE 2

this goal can be delayed, but it cannot be reversed."

The Vice President predicted that "America will have a strong Open Housing Law in 1968 -- further evidence that we are moving ahead toward true equal opportunity for all -- if you let your Congressmen hear from you."

# # # # #

MONDAY AM'S  
MARCH 25, 1968

## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

REMARKS OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY  
1968 TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF  
B'NAI B'RITH WOMEN  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
MARCH 24, 1968

Mrs. Rosenbluth, Dr. Wexler and members of B'nai B'rith Women.  
I feel that here I am among friends.

I mean not simply that I have enjoyed a warm, rewarding personal relationship with Mrs. Rosenbluth, Dr. Wexler and many others in this room.

I mean that I feel "at home" here. This is a place where we speak the same language. . . where we share the same fundamental values . . . where we are motivated by the same impulses toward freedom and social justice.

These basic values are not just a comfort among old friends. They are the essential ingredient in everything we must do if we are successfully to come through these troubled times.

Every period in history has its special quality.

Our period is so characterized by swift and deep-going changes that it has been called "The Age of Acceleration."

We are only at the threshold of this age.

We see changes in science -- all the sciences, social, political, physical and biological.

We see the effect of these changes most sharply in the struggle of our children to adjust to them.

Because this is a period of such ferment, we must be especially mindful of the lasting teachings that have stood the test of the ages.

We must not do this by resisting change. We must adjust to change. Indeed, we must do more: We must take advantage of change more perfectly to achieve the essence of those teachings.

That you have accepted this challenge is clear from the theme of your convention -- "The Possible Dream."

That is a succinct phrase which expresses your millennial heritage -- a heritage, if I may put it in another phrase, of practical idealism.

In our generation we have seen this practical idealism flower in the state of Israel whose twentieth anniversary you are also celebrating in this convention.



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

PAGE 2

I am deeply convinced that practical idealism is the force that has made our own country great.

We are a nation of dreamers as well as doers, and there is no contradiction here. "The Republic is a dream." Carl Sandburg said, "Nothing happens unless first a dream."

I hope we will especially remember this American characteristic today because the continued application of practical idealism is so essential to the solution of our present problems.

And of these problems, none will be more demanding than our efforts to complete the integration of Negro, Spanish surnamed, and Indian citizens into American society.

We have a long way to go on this road. How far, has been made clear again in the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders which offers a clear and compelling view of the conditions which lay behind last summer's disorders. The members of the Commission have made a major contribution toward finding workable solutions to these critical problems.

But let us be clear that we have already traveled a considerable distance. We are not just starting out. Let us maintain some historical perspective.

The history of America is the history of expanding physical and human frontiers. It is a history of acceptance and of new opportunity for successive waves of immigrants. Together we represent the widest variety of ethnic, racial, religious and national groups that have ever peopled a free country.

Our history even includes emancipation of the group that has, throughout all human history, suffered the deepest and most humiliating segregation -- a group that has been subjected to repression no matter what the color or creed of its members. I am speaking of course about women.

We have laid the legal basis in our country for the complete equality of men and women. It is by no means fully realized. But I trust this does not mean we must revert to two separate and unequal societies -- male and female.

I daresay that in no instance is equal opportunity for all groups fully realized in our nation. But the great historic trend has been and continues to be in this direction. And, despite occasional setbacks, it is irreversible.

In the 1960's we have experienced the greatest and most hopeful breakthroughs in race relations in the past 100 years.

Think of the elements that have gone into this revolution:

- A growing complex of judicial decisions, legislative actions and executive orders on the part of government;



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

PAGE 3

-- On the non-government side, the dramatic, non-violent demonstrations for racial and economic justice -- demonstrations in which a cross-section of our people joined hands and hearts with their Negro fellow-citizens.

As the legal foundation for desegregation has been built, demands have grown for action against the whole range of social, economic and human deprivations.

And our nation has responded. We have moved quickly, and on all fronts, to provide more and better education...to provide job training and jobs...to speed new housing...to improve health.

We have recognized that legal equality at the employment window is of little value without equal access to education and training.

And we have responded not only through government but as a nation -- a nation of voluntary social organizations...business...labor...religious institutions...local community groups...people who care.

I need not detail the federal program for you. You know it. You also know that none of it sprang forth perfect at birth.

But we have acted.

We are trying.

The unforgiveable sin would have been to do nothing.

I think we faced -- and still face -- the kind of situation Franklin D. Roosevelt found himself in back in 1932 when he said:

"The country needs -- and unless I mistake its temper, the country demands -- bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something."

Even as we try, of course, we hear the angry cries of separatists -- white and black. There is, as the Commission on Civil Disorders asserts, a movement toward separate black and white societies -- separate and unequal since separatism perpetrates inequality.

But this is only part of the picture, and I do not believe it is the main part. Separatism in America today is a minority movement, led by white and black extremists who can take advantage of current frustrations but do not speak for the bulk of Americans, black and white.

Separatism is the backwash of the past, not the wave of the future.

The main part of the picture is a determination in our nation to build a single society with common opportunities for all. The momentum toward this goal can be delayed, but it cannot be reversed.

Let me also point out that to say that "white society condones" inequity comes dangerously close to a doctrine of group guilt.



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

Page 4

Let us not fall into the error of condemning whole societies -- white or black or German or Arab or Chinese. Let us not look for scapegoats.

My friends, I have spent a lifetime -- yes, as a liberal -- fighting discrimination and segregation of every kind.

I am not about to apologize for it or to let myself be shouldered out of this activity by black racists who don't like the color of my skin or by white supremacists who don't like the multi-color of my ideas.

And I have been but one of unnumbered thousands and millions of Americans, black and white, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish.

It has not always been easy.

We have seen the viciousness, and short-sightedness of the segregationists.

We have seen the tragedy of indifference and selfishness among comfortable Americans . . . even among those who are themselves members of minority groups.

But we have also seen the practical idealism, the self-sacrifice -- even the martyrdom of our fellow citizens -- of Americans of every color and creed.

And it is the practical idealists in our midst -- black and white -- who have leveled the legal barriers around our ghettos and thus intensified the demands of our own underprivileged for their just share of our expanding affluence.

We have seen strides toward equality made in our country in every segment of our life from the bunkers in Vietnam to the cabinet room of the White House and the bench of the United States Supreme Court.

We are a society in motion. Yours is a government of action.

And what is our major domestic preoccupation today?

Are we enacting apartheid laws to separate whites and blacks? Are we cynically resorting to scapegoat anti-Semitism to cover up our failures?

No. Our intense preoccupation, as a government -- and, I think, as a people -- is to provide for every last American in every last urban and rural slum, a way of sharing to his fullest capacity in the possible dream -- the American dream.

And we ask much of ourselves -- in our self-examination, in the standards we set for ourselves.

So I think it is fair to call on all Americans for patience and perspective at the same time we call on them for further and faster progress. Let us practical idealists do our work.





## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

Page 5

Now I must ask your help.

Some of the most urgent business at hand is enactment of the pending Civil Rights Bill with its Open Housing provisions intact. The Senate has acted.

I predict that America will have a strong national Open Housing Law in 1968 -- further evidence that we are moving ahead toward true equal opportunity for all -- if you let your Congressmen hear from you and your neighbors on this crucial measure.

Next in terms of urgency is the voting of appropriations, without cuts, for all the federal programs designed to help disadvantaged Americans help themselves.

This involves -- given other needs and pressures on the economy -- higher taxes. The Congress must act on President Johnson's request for a tax increase. We cannot afford not to provide these urgently needed funds.

Finally I want to speak to each of you as individuals . . . as leaders in your communities. For nothing we can achieve through law or government programs can eliminate the shame or segregation and blighted opportunity if communities themselves do not act.

I am Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity. But I am only a voice in the wilderness unless have your individual help in opening up the lives of the under-privileged youngsters in your communities.

They need -- and I quote from Mrs. D. J. Wasserstrom's report to this convention -- the help of someone who knows "why a person is in need -- where he can get the education that will prepare him for a job -- where he can go to find assistance in getting a job -- how he can utilize the resources available to help himself get that education or job."

That means keeping your community's schools in operation through the summer. It means finding jobs for young people that are not make-work but real work . . . productive work for real earnings and greater personal dignity. It means providing decent chances for recreation and outdoor activity.

I know that your organization has been in touch with the staff of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity and that there has been an exchange of program ideas involving B'nai B'rith Women and B'nai B'rith Youth Organizations. This is encouraging.

I cannot tell you what will work best in your specific community. But I can tell you what some others have done.

For example last summer in the city of New Brunswick, New Jersey, which is near Newark, the new mayor -- fearful that the riots would spill over into New Brunswick -- addressed restless crowds through a bullhorn and asked to be given a chance. The crowds relented.

Within three months the new mayor, with full cooperation from local leaders, started an instant swimming project that consisted of immediate installation of portable swimming pools donated by local business and industrial leaders; turned the basement room of a public housing project into a gaily painted youth center called "Soul City;" reactivated a cruise ship as a summer recreational center; established a job program.



## OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

---

Page 6  
Tension was eased.

I mention these specifics to give you some ideas of what can be done. You are all women, though few of you may be mayors. It happens that the Mayor of New Brunswick was and is a woman -- Mrs. Patricia Sheehan.

\* \* \*

I quote from the Book:

"Look, ye blind, that ye may see.  
Here are people robbed and spoiled,  
They are snared in hovels,  
And hid in slums.  
They have become a prey, and none to rescue,  
A spoil, with none to say restore."

That was Isaiah, the Director of the world's first anti-poverty campaign.

But from that day, the rescuers and the restorers have been at work, dreaming the possible dream -- the dream that is no dream "if" as Herzl said -- "you will it."

# # #



Mr. Berleman  
Pres-Elect  
mildred  
Mrs. Shapiro!  
Madame  
President!

Mrs Rosenbluth  
Dr Wexler - ~~the~~

REMARKS

⊗ "I can hardly  
wait to hear  
what Sim about  
to say"

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

1968 TRIENNIAL CONVENTION OF

B'NAI B'RITH WOMEN

WASHINGTON, D.C.

"adopted son of  
the Covenant"

MARCH 24, 1968

- 8 to 7 - Invitation

"Wally"  
Rosenbluth - (Daughter Karen)

Mrs. Rosenbluth, Dr. Wexler and members of

B'nai B'rith Women. I feel that here I am among friends.

I mean not simply that I have enjoyed a warm,  
rewarding personal relationship with Mrs. Rosenbluth,  
Dr. Wexler and many others in this room.

6 DAY WAR  
Henghis. Kahn  
Hannibal  
Napoleon

Israeli  
w. Queen  
Victoria

I never Refuse  
I Seldom Contradict  
I ~~can~~ always forget.

I mean that I feel "at home" here. This is a place where we speak the same language...where we share the same fundamental values...where we are motivated by the same impulses toward freedom and social justice.

These basic values are not just a comfort among old friends. They are the essential ingredient in everything we must do if we are successfully to come through these troubled times.

Every period in history has its special quality.

Our period is so characterized by swift and deep-going changes that it has been called "The Age of Acceleration."

We are only at the threshold of this Age.

We see changes in science -- all the sciences, social, political, physical and biological.

↳ We see the effect of these changes most sharply in the struggle of our children to adjust to them.

↳ Because this is a period of such ferment, we must be especially mindful of the lasting teachings that have stood the test of the ages.

*But,* We must not do this by resisting change. We must adjust to change. Indeed, we must do more: We must take advantage of change more perfectly to achieve the essence of those teachings.

That you have accepted this challenge is clear from the theme of your convention -- "The Possible Dream."

↳ That is a succinct phrase which expresses your millennial heritage -- a heritage, if I may put it in another phrase, of practical idealism.

In our generation we have seen this practical idealism flower in the state of Israel whose twentieth anniversary you are also celebrating in this convention.

∟ I am deeply convinced that practical idealism is the force that has made our own country great!

∟ We are a nation of dreamers as well as doers, and there is no contradiction here. "The Republic is a dream." Carl Sandburg said, "Nothing happens unless first a dream."

∟ I hope we will especially remember this American characteristic today because the continued application of practical idealism is so essential to the solution of our present problems.

∟ And of these problems, none will be more demanding than our efforts to complete the integration of Negro, Spanish surnamed, and Indian citizens into American society.

↳ We have a long way to go on this road. How far, has been made clear again in the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders which offers a clear and compelling view of the conditions which lay behind last summer's disorders. The members of the Commission have made a major contribution toward finding workable solutions to these critical problems.

↳ But let us be clear that we have already traveled a considerable distance. We are not just starting out.

↳ Let us maintain some historical perspective.

↳ The history of America is the history of expanding physical and human frontiers. It is a history of acceptance and of new opportunity for successive waves of immigrants. Together we represent the widest variety of ethnic, racial, religious and national groups that have ever peopled a free country.

Our history even includes emancipation of the group that has, throughout all human history, suffered the deepest and most humiliating segregation -- a group that has been subjected to repression no matter what the color or creed of its members. I am speaking of course about women.

↳ We have laid the legal basis in our country for the complete equality of men and women. It is by no means fully realized. But I trust this does not mean we must revert to two separate and unequal societies -- male and female.

↳ I daresay that in no instance is equal opportunity for all groups fully realized in our nation. But the great historic trend has been and continues to be in this direction. And, despite occasional setbacks, <sup>it</sup> is irreversible.



In the 1960's we have experienced the greatest and most hopeful breakthroughs in race relations in the past 100 years.

Think of the elements that have gone into this revolution:

└-- A growing complex of judicial decisions, legislative actions and executive orders on the part of government;

└-- On the non-government side, the dramatic, non-violent demonstrations for racial and economic justice -- demonstrations in which a cross-section of our people joined hands and hearts with their Negro fellow-citizens.

└ As the legal foundation for desegregation has been built, demands have grown for action against the whole range of social, economic and human deprivations.

∟ And our nation has responded. We have moved quickly, and on all fronts, to provide more and better education... to provide job training and jobs... to speed new housing... to improve health.

∟ We have recognized that legal equality at the employment window is of little value without equal access to education and training.

∟ And we have responded not only through government but as a nation -- a nation of voluntary social organizations... business... labor... religious institutions... local community groups... people who care.

∟ I need not detail the federal program for you. You know it. You also know that none of it sprang forth perfect at birth.

∟ But we have acted. !

L We are trying.

The unforgiveable sin would have been to do nothing.

L I think we faced -- and still face -- the kind of  
in which situation Franklin D. Roosevelt found himself ~~in~~ back  
in 1932 when he said:

"The country needs -- and unless I mistake  
its temper, the country demands -- bold, persistent  
experimentation. It is common sense to take a  
method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly  
and try another. But above all, try something."

Even as we try, of course, we hear the angry cries  
of separatists -- white and black. There is, as the Commission  
on Civil Disorders asserts, a movement toward separate  
black and white societies -- separate and unequal since  
separatism perpetrates inequality.

But this is only part of the picture, and I do not believe it is the main part. Separatism in America today is a minority movement, led by white and black extremists who can take advantage of current frustrations but do not speak for the bulk of Americans, black or white.

↳ Separatism is the backwash of the past, not the wave of the future.

↳ The main part of the picture is a determination in our nation to build a single society with common opportunities for all. One nation under God - The momentum toward this goal can be delayed, but it cannot be reversed. Rich & Poor

Let me also point out that to say that "white society condones" inequity comes dangerously close to a doctrine of group guilt.

Every man his chance  
The Promise of America

Let us not fall into the error of condemning whole societies -- white or black or German or Arab or Chinese. Let us not look for scapegoats.

My friends, I have spent a lifetime -- yes, as a liberal -- fighting discrimination and segregation of every kind.

I am not about to apologize for it or to let myself be shouldered out of this activity by black racists who don't like the color of my skin or by white supremacists who don't like the multi-color of my ideas.

And I have been but one of unnumbered thousands and millions of Americans, black and white, Catholic, Protestant and Jewish.

It has not always been easy.

We have seen the viciousness, and short-sightedness of the segregationists.

We have seen the tragedy of indifference and selfishness among comfortable Americans...even among those who are themselves members of minority groups.

But we have also seen the practical idealism, the self-sacrifice -- even the martyrdom of our fellow citizens -- of Americans of every color and creed.

And it is the practical idealists in our midst -- black and white -- who have leveled the legal barriers around our ghettos and thus intensified the demands of our own underprivileged for their just share of our expanding affluence.

We have seen strides toward equality made in our country in every segment of our life from the bunkers in Vietnam to the Cabinet room of the White House and the bench of the United States Supreme Court.



↳ We are a society in motion. Yours is a government of action.

And what is our major domestic preoccupation today?

~~Are we enacting apartheid laws to separate whites and blacks? Are we cynically resorting to scapegoat anti-Semitism to cover up our failures?~~

~~No. Our intense preoccupation, as a government -- and, I think, as a people -- is to provide for every last~~

American in every ~~last~~ urban and rural ~~sum~~, *any way away*

of sharing to his fullest capacity in the possible dream -- the American dream. (Partnership)

And we ask much of ourselves -- in our self-examination, in the standards we set for ourselves.

↳ *Let a man have nothing to do for his Country,  
And he will have no love for it."*

So I think it is fair to call on all Americans for patience and perspective at the same time we call on them for further and faster progress. Let us practical idealists do our work. !

Now I must ask your help.

Some of the most urgent business at hand is enactment of the pending Civil Rights Bill with its Open Housing provisions intact. The Senate has acted.

I predict that America will have ~~a strong~~ <sup>an effective</sup> national Open Housing Law in 1968 -- further evidence that we are moving ahead toward true equal opportunity for all -- if you let your Congressmen hear from you on this crucial measure.

Next in terms of urgency is the voting of <sup>the</sup> appropriations, ~~without cuts~~, for all the federal programs designed to help disadvantaged Americans help themselves. !

This involves -- given other needs and pressures on the economy -- higher taxes. The Congress must act on President Johnson's request for a tax increase. We cannot afford not to provide these urgently needed funds.

L Finally I want to speak to each of you as individuals... as leaders in your communities. For nothing we can achieve through law or government ~~can~~ can eliminate the shame of ~~segregation and~~ blighted opportunity if communities themselves do not act.

I am Chairman of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity. But I am only a voice in the wilderness

unless I have your individual help in opening up the ~~door~~ *door* of *opportunity for* the under-privileged youngsters in your communities.

They need -- and I quote from Mrs. D. J. Wasserstrom's report to this convention -- the help of someone who knows "why a person is in need -- where he can get the education that will prepare him for a job -- where he can go to find assistance in getting a job -- how he can utilize the resources available to help himself get that education or job."

↳ That means keeping your community schools in operation through the summer. ↳ It means, finding jobs for young people that are not make-work but real work...productive work for real earnings and greater personal dignity. ↳ It means providing decent chances for recreation and outdoor activity.

↳ I know that your organization has been in touch with the staff of the President's Council on Youth Opportunity and that there has been an exchange of program ideas involving B'nai B'rith Women and B'nai B'rith Youth Organizations. This is encouraging.

*Thank you*

I cannot tell you what will work best in your specific community. But I can tell you what some others have done.

For example last summer in the city of New Brunswick, New Jersey, which is near Newark, the new mayor -- fearful that the riots would spill over into New Brunswick -- addressed restless crowds through a bullhorn and asked to be given a chance. The crowds relented.

Within three months the new mayor, with full cooperation from local leaders, started an instant swimming project that consisted of immediate installation of portable swimming pools donated by local business and industrial leaders; turned the basement room of a public housing project into a gaily painted youth center called "Soul City;" reactivated a cruise ship as a floating community center; rehabilitated an old National Guard Armory as a summer recreational center; established a job program.

Tension was eased.

I mention these specifics to give you some ideas of what can be done. You are all women, though few of you may be mayors. It happens that the Mayor of New Brunswick was and is a woman -- Mrs. Patricia Sheehan.

\* \* \*

I quote from the Book:

"Look, ye blind, that ye may see.

Here are people robbed and spoiled,

They are snared in hovels,

And hid in slums.

They have become a prey, and none to rescue,

A spoil, with none to say restore."

That was Isaiah, the Director of the world's first anti-poverty campaign.



But from that day, the rescuers and the restorers  
have been at work, dreaming the possible dream -- the  
dream that is no dream "if" as Herzl said -- "you will it." !

I want you to "Will it"

# # #

Not security  
Not development

Peace Blocks

"Guerrillas -  
Infiltration  
Assassination" }



# 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](http://www.mnhs.org)