



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

GENERAL QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

MAY 14, 1968

This is an assembly of veterans.

There are people here -- pioneer Freedom Fighters -- who know the icy glacier of prejudice -- and know that it will never yield to one summertime's warmth.

There are people here so seasoned in the struggle that they have compassion -- even for the haters who are the ultimate victims of their own prejudices.

And those people here, those veterans -- black and white -- are united in love of their country and belief in the ultimate triumph of goodness in this nation, as in their fellow man.

Many may be parents of the Freedom Riders who went forth seven years ago this week.

Many may be kindred of the men and women who are marching now.

But all march in the same paths that took men like S. T. Jones, George Clinton, Joseph Price, Limas Wall, William Walls, Stephen Spottswood and William Trent from private life to the vanguard of responsibility for America.

These, too, are people who would rather light a candle than curse the darkness.

There is a lesson taught in your ministry which every young American ought to hear:

"Never take your college and denomination for granted, for people whom you never knew broke their hearts to give them to you."

There is another lesson I have sensed from my friends in this denomination -- and I have tried to make it my own teaching.

It is the sense that injustice never breaks the spirit -- it only toughens it.

It is the sense that the only bitterness and sadness we ought to admit is for the poor misguided bigot with so little faith and love for himself that he inflicts his fear on others.

This is a ministry of love.

I wish every ministry could give its people such a taste for sunlight.

Churches everywhere in America have begun to warm with a new sense of social justice -- and we need more of it.

We need more worship together.

It is not enough that for six days we work together if on the seventh we segregate.

We need to hear the word together.

We need to listen to the lessons of democracy together.

America has been blessed with teachers in the ways of humility and brotherhood and conviction.

And America has been a blessing when it has responded to those teachers.

Alan Barkley was my teacher -- at the same convention where I was moved to speak for justice 20 years ago -- when he reminded us that Jefferson "did not proclaim that all white, or black, or red, or yellow men are equal;

"That all Christian or Jewish men are equal;

"That all Protestant and Catholic men are equal;

"That all rich or poor men are equal;

"That all good or bad men are equal.

"What he declared was that all men are equal; and the equality he proclaimed was equality in the right to enjoy the blessings of free government in which they may participate and to which they have given their consent."

And then I stood and called upon my party to get out of the shadow of state's rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was my teacher when he told us that "these unhappy times call for the building of plans ... that build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

Bishop James Hood was my teacher when the gates of despair and defeatism could not prevail against him -- when he inspired men to nail their faith to the evolving good of all men and the richer sense of justice waiting to be tapped in this democracy.

Martin Luther King was my teacher, when he taught us, not that one kind of American should refrain from violence in the quest for racial justice, but that every American must strive and suffer and sacrifice for universal justice.

America will never turn its back on such teachers, nor on those who follow them.

Never did they teach us that freedom could somehow escape from law and order.

It is not that we are proud of every law.

It is not that we are wedded to every element of social order.

But we can never move forward on a tightrope, displaying a neat balance of terror. Peaceful marchers in 1963 knew that. And poor people marching on Washington today know that their strength lies in the enduring morality of brotherhood and love and justice, not in violence.

In this nation, law and order give us, above all else, the elbow room to change the law and improve the order.

Either freedom is forever imperfect, or else the people are not free.

Once upon a time -- in the days of slavery -- three-fifths of a man was regarded as "freedom." We changed it.

Once upon a time our 18-hour work day was "freedom." We changed it.

Once upon a time -- separate but equal was "freedom." We changed it.

Order is never without error. To permit and perpetuate a ghetto is a public choice, however silent the agreement and however private the parties.

We are going to change it.

To undereducate, underfeed, underemploy, overcharge and overlook a massive number of Americans, of any race or calling, is a public decision -- no matter how private the perpetration.

We are going to change it.

I call upon you to carry that message to a whole generation of young Americans -- Negro and white -- who need to hear the creed of peaceful progress.

They must know as you know that the litany of progress is not "burn, baby, burn," but "learn, baby, learn," and "earn, baby, earn."

They must know that quiet courage and positive, undramatic deeds are far more important than empty words that inflame without improving.

They must know that their country has gone through trials before.

They must know that the whole sweep of American history has not been toward repression, denial and prejudice, but day by day ... year by year ... toward overcoming them.

And we shall overcome.

The best way we can prove our respect for law and order is to improve the system it preserves.

I suggest to you today that an important next step is to introduce more black Americans to part of the system which has not been theirs. I mean the business world.

Can you believe that until recently, in a country driving 97 million cars, there was one Negro automobile dealer?

Count 40 white Americans. One is a proprietor.

To find one black proprietor, count one thousand. And with rare exceptions, he is in a marginal business operating only in a black community.

Equal employment opportunity means more than an equal right to a job. It means more than promotion on the basis of ability alone.

It also means the right to match wits on your own as a proprietor.

You and I know that plans are being made now, to open the door for more Negro business development.

Government underwriting ... private management training and private investment ... changes in insurance systems -- all the institutional techniques are being reviewed.

Well that's fine. But I can think of one way to begin and begin now.

It is the way of the family and it befits the family of man.

I'll bet there are white businessmen of good will and good sense who would welcome a new partner right now from their own neighborhood ... a partner perhaps staked to his share with capital loaned at low, subsidized rates ... a partner willing to learn the business and share the responsibility and the challenge of being boss.

Businesses have grown and endured that way for years in this country -- long before junior needed a graduate degree in business administration to learn how to take inventory.

Believe me, I was counting pills long before I was counting votes.

Now when that kind of partnership looks at the balance sheet and sighs, "We shall overcome ..." -- every businessman in America, with renewed understanding, can say, "Amen, brother."

And let me tell you, that kind of brotherhood is not just words painted on glass.

It is implanted in the American tradition.

It is nourished with pride and self-respect.

It is enriched and toughened by change.

But it is born in the first place in the teachings Jesus gave us and in the spirit of the unimprovable, unchangeable law and order given to us and to every generation ... the law that says:

"Thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength...

And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

#

NEWS FROM:

For Further Information,
Contact: Larry Still
V106

United Democrats For Humphrey

1100 17th St., NW

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, D. C. 20036

(202) 393-6420

SECOND MAJOR NEGRO GROUP
BACKS HUMPHREY CAMPAIGN

DETROIT--The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church has become the second major Negro denomination to boost the candidacy of Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey for the Presidency.

At the General Quadrennial Conference of the AME Zion Church here, hundreds of delegates, led by their bishops, gave the Vice President a rousing welcome after he was introduced by Bishop Alfred Dunston as "our next President."

Bishop Dunston is chairman of the Board of Bishops of the AME Zion Church, which has a national membership of 750,000.

On May 2, the African Methodist Episcopal Church Quadrennial Conference in Philadelphia also virtually endorsed Vice President Humphrey for the Presidency.

One of the emotional moments of the Vice President's participation in the AME Zion National Conference in Detroit last Tuesday came after his address.

Retired Bishop William J. Walls, 85, of Chicago, stirred his audience with a rare display of classical oratory in his 10-minute tribute to the Vice President.

While Bishop Walls spoke, and the thousand people in the audience shouted "amens," the Vice President sat on the edge of his chair, tears rolling down his cheeks.

When Bishop Walls finished his eloquent tribute, he and the Vice President warmly embraced. In this atmosphere, charged with emotion, the audience responded by singing "America" and "We Shall Overcome".

more

FROM: UNITED DEMOCRATS FOR HUMPHREY
1100 17th Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. (202) 393-6420

For further information:
Larry Still
V-117

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1968

VEEP URGES WHITE FIRMS
TO WELCOME NEGRO PARTNERS

DETROIT, MAY 21 -- Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey has urged white businessmen to welcome black partners from the neighborhoods they are serving in order to open the door for more Negro business development.

In a dramatic speech last Tuesday night before some 800 delegates to the General Convention of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Detroit, the Vice-President declared the next important step in racial progress is "to introduce black Americans to part of the system which has not been theirs. I mean the business world."

Speaking in the motor capital of the world, Humphrey rhetorically asked "can you believe that until recently, in a country driving 97 million cars, there was one Negro automobile dealer?"

He also pointed out that one in 40 white persons was a proprietor of some sort in America but only one in a thousand American Negroes was a proprietor "and with rare exceptions, he is in a marginal business operating only in the black community."

"Equal opportunity," Humphrey told the applauding delegates "means more than an equal right to a job. It means more than promotion on the basis of ability alone. It also means the right to match wits on your own as a proprietor..."

Declaring that "we are going to change" the ghetto, the Vice-President emphasized that plans are being made now to open the doors for more business development through government underwriting...private management training and private investment, changes in insurance systems, etc."

He added that "the proposed changes are fine, but I can think of only one way to begin and begin now.

"I'll bet there are white businessmen of good will and good sense who would welcome a new partner right now from their own neighborhood...a partner perhaps staked to his share with capital loaned at low subsidized rates...a partner willing to learn the responsibilities and the challenges of being boss."

(more)

The leading presidential candidate called upon the conference delegates and participants, many of whom are veterans of the civil rights movement, to teach their children and followers to "learn, baby, learn and earn, baby, earn, instead of burn, baby burn."

They must know that quiet courage and positive undramatic deeds are far more important than empty words that inflame without improving, said the Vice-President.

Declaring that the best way to prove respect for law and order is to improve the system it preserves, Humphrey said the young generation today must know that the whole sweep of American history has not been toward repression, denial and prejudice, but day by day...year by year, toward overcoming them. And we shall overcome."

The favored presidential nominee paid tribute to such pioneers as AME Zion Bishops William Walls, Stephen Spottswood and William Trent and slain martyr Martin Luther King by saying these leaders taught Freedom comes with real justice and law and order.

The Poor People marching to Washington today know their strength lies in the enduring morality of Brotherhood and love and justice, not in violence, he concluded.

May 14, Detroit, Michigan

LISTS OF THE AME PLATFORM GUESTS ARE:

Mayor Jerome P. Cavanagh
Congressman John Conyers
Congressman Charles Diggs
State Senator Basil Brown
State Rep. Daisy Elliot
Dr. Kenneth N. Hylton, Vice Chairman State Democratic Committee
Bishop William Jacob Walls
Bishop Raymond Luther Jones
Bishop Herbert Bell Shaw
Bishop Stephen Gill Spottswood
Bishop William Andrew Stewart
Bishop E. Erbank
Bishop C. Ewbank Tucker
Bishop Joseph Dixon Cauthern
Bishop Felix S. Anderson
Bishop William Milton Smith
Bishop S. Dorme Lartey
Bishop William A. Hilliard
Bishop Alfred G. Dunston
Dr. William Mitchell Poe
Dr. William Carleton Ardrey
Dr. E. Franklin Jackson

✓ Cong Diggs
✓ Repres. Rosetta Long
✓ Repres. Daisy Elliot
✓ Sen Basil Brown

Dr Franklin Jackson

Cong Conyers
Cong Diggs
Cong D'Hara
Cong Ford
Cong Huffelton

Ambassador Williams

Bishop Charles
Liggins
elect

Bishop Anderson
Bishop Spottswood
Bishop Hilliard
Bishop Jones
Prayer

Dr. Fabrey
Pastor of Church
Shirley Robinson
Offield Duke

Dr. Franklin

REMARKS

~~At the time~~
- Cong. Congress
- Cony Diggs

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

Jim O'Hara
Bill Ford
Martha Griffiths

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

GENERAL QUADRENNIAL CONVENTION

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

MAY 14, 1968

Bishop Hilliard
Bishop Spottswood
Bishop Ruess

St Pauls Church
Dr. Arbery

① Shirley Robinson
on my staff

② Ofield Dukes

(Bishop Jones
Prayer)

"The way you treat people, is the way
you treat God"

③ Bishop
Charles
Foggie
PMS
24th St

This is an assembly of veterans.

There are people here -- pioneer Freedom

Fighters -- who know the icy glacier of prejudice --

and know that it will never yield to one summertime's
warmth.

There are people here so seasoned in the
struggle that they have compassion -- even for the
haters who are the ultimate victims of their own
prejudice.

hate and

∟ And those people here, those veterans -- black
and white -- are united in love of their country and
belief in the ultimate triumph of goodness in this
nation, as in their fellow man.

∟ Many may be parents of the Freedom Riders
who went forth seven years ago this week.

∟ Many may be kindred of the men and women
who are marching now.

∟ But all march in the same paths that took
men like S. T. Jones, George Clinton, Joseph Price,
Limas Wall, William Walls, Stephen Spottswood and
William Trent from private life to the vanguard of
responsibility for America.

∟ These, too, are people who would rather
light a candle than curse the darkness.

∟ There is a lesson taught in your ministry
which every young American ought to hear:

"Never take your college and denomination
for granted, for people whom you never knew broke
their hearts to give them to you."

∟ There is another lesson I have sensed from
my friends in this denomination -- and I have tried
to make it my own teaching.

∟ It is the sense that injustice never breaks
the spirit -- it only toughens it.

∟ It is the sense that the only bitterness and
sadness we ought to admit is for the poor misguided
bigot with so little faith and love for himself that he
inflicts his fear on others.

∟ This is a ministry of love.

↳ I wish every ministry could give its people
such a taste for sunlight.

↳ Churches everywhere in America have begun
to warm with a new sense of social justice -- and we
need more of it.

↳ We need more worship together.

↳ It is not enough that for six days we work
together if on the seventh we segregate.

↳ We need to hear the word together.

↳ We need to listen to the lessons of democracy
together.

↳ America has been blessed with teachers in
the ways of humility and brotherhood and conviction.

↳ And America has been a blessing when it has
responded to those teachers.

(Alben Barkley was my teacher -- at the same convention where I was moved to speak for justice 20 years ago -- when he reminded us that Jefferson "did not proclaim that all white, or black, or red, or yellow men are equal;

"That all Christian or Jewish men are equal;

"That all Protestant and Catholic men are equal;

"That all rich or poor men are equal;

"That all good or bad men are equal.

"What he declared was that all men are equal; and the equality he proclaimed was equality in the right to enjoy the blessings of free government in which they may participate and to which they have given their consent."

And then I stood and called upon my party to get out of the shadow of state's rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was my teacher when he told us that "these unhappy times call for the building of plans ... that build from the bottom up and not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

Bishop James Hood was my teacher when the gates of despair and defeatism could not prevail against him -- when he inspired men to nail their faith to the evolving good of all men and the richer sense of justice waiting to be tapped in this democracy.

1 Martin Luther King was my teacher, when he taught us, not that one kind of American should refrain from violence in the quest for racial justice, but that every American must strive and suffer and sacrifice for universal justice.

2 America will never turn its back on such teachers, nor on those who follow them.

3 Never did they teach us that freedom could somehow escape from law and order.

4 It is not that we are proud of every law.

5 It is not that we are wedded to every element of social order.

6 But we can never move forward on a tightrope, displaying a neat balance of terror!

7 Peaceful marchers in 1963 knew that, 8 And poor people marching on Washington today know that their strength lies in the enduring morality of brotherhood and love and justice, not in violence.

Beautiful
speech

↳ In this nation, law and order give us,
above all else, the elbow room to change the law
and improve the order.

↳ Either freedom is forever imperfect, or
else the people are not free.

↳ Once upon a time -- in the days of slavery --
three-fifths of a man was regarded as "freedom."

↳ We changed it.

↳ Once upon a time ^{an} ~~our~~ 18-hour work day was
"freedom." We changed it.

↳ Once upon a time -- separate but equal was
"freedom." We changed it.

↳ Order is never without error. ↳ To permit and
perpetuate a ghetto is a public choice, however silent
the agreement and however private the parties.

↳ We are going to change it.

↳ To undereducate, underfeed, underemploy,
overcharge and overlook a massive number of
Americans, of any race or calling, is a public
decision -- no matter how private the perpetration.

↳ We are going to change it.

↳ I call upon you to carry that message to a
whole generation of young Americans -- Negro and
white -- who need to hear the creed of peaceful progress.

↳ They must know as you know that the litany of
progress is not "burn, baby, burn," but "learn, baby,
learn," and "earn, baby, earn." - *Pretext to Progress!*

↳ They must know that quiet courage and positive,
undramatic deeds are far more important than empty
words that inflame without improving.

↳ They must know that their country has gone
through trials before.

↳ They must know that the whole sweep of American history has not been toward repression, denial and prejudice, but day by day ... year by year ... toward overcoming them. — Emancipation

↳ And we shall overcome. !

↳ The best way we can prove our respect for law and order is to improve the system it preserves.

↳ I suggest to you today that an important

next step is to introduce more black Americans to part of the system which has not been theirs.

↳ I mean the business world.

↳ Can you believe that until recently, in a country driving 97 million cars, there was ^{but} one Negro automobile dealer?

↳ Count 40 white Americans. One is a proprietor.

Repress.
Rosetta
Ferguson

Schools
negro
history
Rosetta
Ferguson

Business

↳ To find one black proprietor, count one thousand. ↳ And with rare exceptions, he is in a marginal business operating only in a black community.

↳ Equal employment opportunity means more than an equal right to a job. It means more than promotion on the basis of ability alone.

↳ It also means the right to match wits on your own as a proprietor.

↳ You and I know that plans are being made now, to open the door for more Negro business development.

↳ Government underwriting ... private management training and private investment ... changes in insurance systems -- all the institutional techniques are being reviewed *and rewritten*

↳ Well that's fine. But I can think of one way to begin and begin now.

↳ It is the way of the family and it befits
the family of man.

I'll bet there are white businessmen of good
will and good sense who would welcome a new partner
right now from their own neighborhood ... a partner,
perhaps staked to his share with capital loaned at low,
subsidized rates ... a partner willing to learn the
business and share the responsibility and the challenge
of being boss.

↳ Businesses have grown and endured that way
for years in this country -- long before junior needed
a graduate degree in business administration to learn
how to take inventory.

A. Phamant ↳ Believe me, I was counting pills long before I
was counting votes.

Now when that kind of partnership looks at the balance sheet and sighs, "We shall overcome ..." -- every businessman in America, with renewed understanding, can say, "Amen, brother."

∠ And let me tell you, that kind of brotherhood is not just words painted on glass.

∠ It is implanted in the American tradition.

∠ It is nourished with pride and self-respect.

∠ It is enriched and toughened by change.

But it is born in the first place in the teachings Jesus gave us and in the spirit of the unimprovable, unchangeable law and order given to us and to every generation ... the law that says:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength ...

And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Vice President Humphrey

Address to 38th Quadrennial Session

Zion Church - Detroit, Michigan

May 14, 1968

I know that there are representatives here from, I believe, forty-one states and from the Virgin Islands and from Guinea, Liberia, Ghana and Nigeria and Jamaica. This is not only a meeting of our fellow citizens but it's an international meeting and I am very, very pleased and proud to be able to participate in a meeting of such great significance.

Now, everybody that speaks from a pulpit generally has a text. I'm not going to quote to you from scripture, but I am going to quote to you from a preacher out in my part of the country who was speaking at a morning service in my little village of Waverly, Minnesota.

Now, he wasn't a Methodist because there isn't a Methodist church in that town. I married a Presbyterian girl and she does get me over there every so often. It was a little Presbyterian church and this minister said these words: "The way you treat people is the way you treat God."

I believe there is more significance in terms of human rights, of human dignity, of the relationship of man to his fellow man and man to God in that short statement than almost any message that I could bring to you today.

And people who proclaim themselves to be religious people, proclaim themselves to be people of soul and spirit -- and we are as

children of God people of soul and spirit -- should remember that the greatest tribute that you can pay to God Almighty is how you treat yourself and your neighbor.

I am talking to a group of people that represent the highest qualities of American citizenship. I want to say to you what I said to another group of churchmen not long ago: when I hear an audience like this sing our National Anthem I want every American to know that the music that comes from these voices is not merely the music of the voice but of the spirit of Americans, who since the beginning of this Republic have fought for the liberty and the freedom of this Nation. That is what your sons and daughters and your forebears have done since the days at Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill.

Maybe this is why Rep. Rosetta Ferguson's program of getting Negro history taught in our schools becomes so relevant and so important.

How tragic it is that a very important, vital and meaningful part of the American citizenry should have so few references, except for the period of slavery, in our history books.

May I say that I am proud to be the sponsor of the African museum in Washington, D.C., which is one of my first works. One of my first civic endeavors in the Nation's Capitol was to bring the story, the true story, of the many patriotic and valuable contributions of the black man, of the negro, to his country, the United States of America. Because, make no mistake about it,

your forebears were here before most of the people who stand in judgment of you.

Now I am talking to an assembly of veterans. Some of you are veterans only in sense of intensity of your service because there are young people here as well as those who have been in the service of this great faith and this great church for many, many years.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is a great denomination in our religious life.

There are people here that I would call the pioneer Freedom Fighters who know the icy glacier of prejudice and know that it will never yield to just one summertime's warmth or one summer of hot weather.

There are people here so seasoned in the struggle for freedom that they have compassion even for the haters who are, by the way, the ultimate victims of their own hate and their own prejudice.

And those people here, those veterans -- black and white -- have something in common. They are united in love of their country and in the belief in the ultimate triumph of goodness in this nation, as well as in their fellow man. That's why I'm here, that's my belief.

I was asked in the limousine coming from the airport what it was that got me interested in civil rights, in human rights. I said I just never knew anything else. I was brought up that way.

My father before me and his family before him.

Bigotry and prejudice and discrimination, they never entered the door of our homes or our hearts. Many in this room may well be the parents of Freedom Riders who went forth seven years ago this week. And what a memorable, historical moment that is and was.

Many may be kindred or kinfolk of the men and women who are marching now as they appeal to the conscience of this nation asking for redress of their grievances.

But all march in the same paths that took men like S. T. Jones, George Clinton, Joseph Price, Limas Wall, William Walls, Stephen Spottswood, William Trent, and others from private life to the vanguard of responsibility for America.

These, too, are people who would rather light a candle than to curse the darkness. They know that evil triumphs when good men fail to act and they know that when good men act, good things happen.

Now there is a lesson taught in your ministry which every young American ought to hear -- and I want you to take this lesson again and again to your young people. That lesson in your ministry is in these words: "Never take your college and denomination for granted, for people whom you never knew broke their hearts to give them to you."

I've said to hundreds and thousands of young college students today and in my years of public service and teaching that those of us who are privileged to have a college education -- it is a privilege, you know -- literally owe the rest of our lives to our nation.

Who could ever pay for a library, who could pay for the works of Shakespeare, what tuition price could you pay for the works of the prophets, the psalms. There isn't any amount of money that you can put down on the line and pay for that.

Those who are privileged to have the opportunity of a higher education, if they live to be a hundred and give half their time to public service, would barely pay the interest on the obligation that they owe the rest of the nation.

Now, there's a lesson that I have sensed for my friends in this denomination -- and I have many friends in this denomination throughout our country. I have tried to make this lesson my own teaching. It is the sense that injustice never breaks the spirit, it only toughens it.

As a friend of mine once said -- and he's been broke many times but never poor, a lot of difference -- those who have been scorched by the fires of injustice have not had their spirit broken. That spirit has been refined in the refiner's fire of conviction.

It is this sense that the only bitterness and sadness we ought to admit is for the poor, misguided bigot with so little faith and so little love for himself that he inflects his fear on others. That's the man to be pitied.

Now this my friends is the ministry of love. I wish that every ministry could give its people such a taste for sunlight.

All that I have said is what you already know and what you preach and what you practice. Churches everywhere in America have begun to warm and to become alive with a new sense of social justice and we need more of it.

I hear people say many times that religion has lost its hold on the people.

I hear many of our super-sophisticated souls say that God is dead.

I've heard all that nonsense. But let me tell you that there is a spirit of social consciousness in America today, a spirit of concern like there's never been before in the history of this nation, and to me that is the meaning in a large measure of religion.

When you start to treat God the way you treat people or vice versa, then you start to get the feeling of a religious spirit.

We need to do many things together and I am here to talk about working together -- not working apart but together. We need more worship together just as we've had here today.

I took care in the Senate of the United States of the management of the civil rights act of 1964. It passed.

And how did we get it -- by standing apart, by going our separate ways? No, my fellow Americans, we accomplished it by working together -- black and white, protestant, catholic and Jew, businessmen, labor, private citizen, government official, we stood together as a mighty family for a common cause. And we won that fight.

You know it's not enough that for six days we work together and on the seventh that we should segregate. Not at all. We need to hear the word together, and when we listen to the same word together, then we become the same people together. We need to listen to the lessons of democracy together.

America has been blessed with teachers in the ways of humility and brotherhood and conviction, and what is there greater than to be teacher.

In the Jewish faith, rabbi was teacher. Christ himself was called rabbi, teacher. The bishop, every bishop, teacher. Every minister, every pastor, every priest, teacher and might I say every President and every Vice President must be teacher -- teacher for the nation, teacher for the lessons of democracy together. America has been a blessing to one and all when it has responded to those teachers.

Let me just list some of the teachers that I have known and just a few: Alben Barkley was a teacher, my teacher, at the same convention where I was moved to speak for justice 20 years ago. Alben Barkley, by the way, was a Methodist and he spoke with the evangelical fervor, might I say, of a Methodist too.

I remember when he spoke in Philadelphia 20 years ago, when he reminded us -- and here are his words, listen to these beautiful words of American history and of religious conviction -- that Jefferson "did not proclaim that all white, or black, or red, or yellow men are equal; that all Christian or Jewish men are equal; that all Protestant and Catholic men are equal; that all rich and poor men are equal; that all good and bad men are equal. What he declared was that all men are equal; and the equality he proclaimed was the equality in the right to enjoy the blessing of free government in which they may participate and to which they have given their consent."

They're the words of a great Senator, a great Vice President of this nation, who understood the meaning of America. And what he said was that human equality is not on the basis of this man or that man but all men, and that the blessings of our society belong to all people.

And then I stood at that same convention and called upon my party to walk out of the shadows of state's rights and to walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights.

And some of you may remember that that convention was torn apart. Some of you may remember that some people left. Some of you may remember that others were angry.

But all of you remember that as a result of that convention and the forthright stand of Harry S. Truman he was elected President of the United States.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was my teacher too when he told us that "these unhappy times call for the building of plans...that build from the bottom up, not from the top down, that put their faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid."

But Franklin Roosevelt told us that democracy must have an ever-expanding base, that democracy must grow like a child, it must grow into its full maturity and that everybody must be a participant.

He told us that, my fellow Americans, almost thirty-five years ago and we're still learning that lesson and we need to remember it.

Bishop James Hood was my teacher too when the gates of despair and defeatism could not prevail against him -- when he inspired men to nail their faith to the evolving good of all men and the richer sense of justice waiting to be tapped in this democracy. He was a great teacher.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was my teacher too, when he taught us not that one kind of American should refrain from violence in the quest for racial justice, but that every American must strive and indeed suffer and sacrifice, if need be, for universal justice. That was his dream. To be judged on merit. To be accepted as man. To be accepted as one of God's children.

Now, America will never turn its back on such teachers because these are true teachers. Nor will America turn its back on those who follow them. Never did they teach us that freedom could somehow escape from law and order.

It is not that we are proud of every law. Indeed some of them we're not proud of at all.

It is not that we are wedded to every element of the present social order. On the contrary, we seek change, important and meaningful change.

But we can never move forward on a tightrope displaying a neat sense of balance of terror, or in other words to stand on the precipice with people violently pushing and shoving.

Peaceful marchers in Washington in 1963 knew that and poor people marching on Washington today know that their strength lies in the enduring morality of brotherhood and love and justice, not in violence. And that must be the accepted norm, the accepted standard if we are to accomplish what every one of us wants.

In this nation, my fellow Americans, law and order give us, above all else, the elbow room necessary to change the law and to improve the order. Law and order must be no defense of the status quo.

Law and order must be an opening. It must represent a framework in which you can bring out the necessary changes to meet human need. And it can be done.

Either freedom is forever imperfect, or else the people are not free. Each year we make new freedom.

Once upon a time, mind you, in the days of slavery, three-fifths of a man was regarded as "freedom." But we've changed that.

Once upon a time, an 18 hour work day was "freedom." We changed that.

Once upon a time, separate but equal was called "freedom." But we've changed that.

Order is never without its mistakes or error. To permit and to perpetuate a ghetto is in a very real sense a public choice, however silent the agreement and however private the parties.

But we can't permit that and we're going to change it and we're going to change it together in the democratic process.

We're going to do it within the framework of our country and our constitution and our system because we're going to build on that system rather than to destroy it.

To undereducate, underfeed, underemploy, overcharge and overlook a massive number of Americans, of any race or calling,

is in a sense a public decision -- no matter how private the perpetration. But my dear friends, we are going to change it. It cannot survive. You can't have that in America.

I call upon you to carry that message to a whole generation of young Americans -- Negro and white -- who need to hear the creed of peaceful progress.

My fellow Americans, remember that poverty is not the special province of the black man. There are more poor whites than poor blacks in America. Poverty knows no race, no region. Poverty is a curse to mankind and it needs to be eliminated. And we have the means and the tools for the first time in human history here in America to eliminate this curse on mankind.

But old and young alike must know as you know that the litany of progress is not "burn, baby, burn," but it is "learn, baby, learn." It is "earn, baby, earn."

We're going to turn protest into progress. That's the whole purpose of what we seek to do.

Our people must know that quiet courage and positive, undramatic deeds are far more important than empty words that inflame without improving.

Some of the greatest freedom fighters today you've never heard of. Some of the people that are doing the most to overcome the injustices never get their name in print.

It's this patient, steadfast, courageous, sacrificing service to people and country day in and day out that represents the real American patriotism and represents the real militant.

The militant person that is sufficiently militant to submerge his own desire for publicity in order to be able to serve the public and to serve his fellow man. That's the real militant.

The young and the old alike must know that their country has gone through difficult trials before. They must know that the whole sweep of American history has not been towards repression, denial and injustice, but rather day by day -- year by year -- the sweep of American history has been toward overcoming injustice and denial, repression and prejudice.

Our democracy has grown. It has matured. And when we say we shall overcome it is not a phrase, it's a testimonial to America because we have been overcoming.

And the best way that we can prove our respect for law and order is to improve the system that it preserves. That's the only way that you can have law and order.

I suggest to you today that an important next step is to introduce more black Americans to part of the system which has not been theirs.

And let me talk for just a moment on that part of the system that I referred to - I mean the business world.

Can you believe that until recently, in a country driving 97 million cars, there was but one Negro automobile dealer? Is that what we mean by equal opportunity?

Count 40 white Americans. One is a proprietor out of every 40. To find one black proprietor, one black businessman, count one thousand, and you will find one and with rare exceptions -- like my friend Congressman Diggs here, who is an eminently successful man -- with rare exceptions that one you find out of a thousand is in a marginal business operating only in a black community.

One of the sure ways, my fellow Americans, black and white for us to protect and defend this nation is to have everybody have a share in it.

The day of the black man being the employee of the white man year in and year out, business in and business out, is on its way out.

You know I have been told and I believe in the worth of private property. It is valuable and it does do something for you. Private property is good and I have often said if private property is as good as I know it to be, if it's good for me, then it's good for the other fellow. And everybody ought to have a little of it.

Equal employment opportunity means more than an equal right to a job these days. It means more even than a promotion on the basis of ability alone.

Equal employment opportunity means the right to match wits on your own as a proprietor against somebody else that's a proprietor. It means the right of ownership as well as work.

You and I know that plans are being made now, thank goodness, to open the door for more Negro business development. I am happy to tell you that I have served for some months in the government as a chairman of a cabinet committee that has been working on a program which we will unfold to you of how we can better help people help themselves to become property owners, businessmen, management as well as skilled and trained workers. Government underwriting, private management, training and private investment, changes in insurance systems -- all the institutional techniques are now being reviewed and many of them rewritten.

That's just fine. But I can think of one way to begin and to begin now. It is the way of the family and it befits the family of man.

I'll bet you that there are white businessmen of good will and good sense who, if we but go to them and talk to them, would welcome a new partner right now from their own neighborhood -- a partner perhaps staked to his share with capital loaned at low, and even subsidized interest rates, a partner willing to learn the business and share the responsibility and the challenge of being boss.

We're going to have to apply some of the same techniques to the ghettos and the slums for the underprivileged people there that we do in our foreign aid program.

I've said so many times that if we can lend to people that we have never met, people who are far away yet very important,

at low rates of interest for 40 years re-payment, why can't we be as considerate to somebody at home who needs a break.

And in my experience as your Vice President traveling around this world, I found that the most successful private enterprises where American capital is involved abroad are those enterprises in which there is what they call a kind of a sharing of the capital requirements in which part of it is American capital and part of it is foreign capital.

I came back from Arica after visiting nine nations, and every place I went I saw this happening. Now if we can take American capital, which is essentially white man's capital, to invest it in Ghana or Nigeria or Kenya or the Ivory Coast or Liberia and if we then insist that there be a sharing in that capital structure with the capital of the country in which it is invested, why can't we do the same thing in our cities right here in America, where we work it out together in private enterprise and private ownership.

You know, businesses have grown and endured this way for years in our country, where people have been brought in, been trained and taken over, long before Junior needed a graduate degree in Business Administration to learn how to take inventory.

A lot of people have worked this out just in plain ordinary common sense. Believe me, I was counting pills in my Daddy's drug-store long before I was counting votes. And I want to tell you, if I don't count enough votes, I'll still be counting pills.

Now, when this partnership looks at the balance sheet and sighs, "We shall overcome..." every businessman in America, with renewed understanding, can say, "Amen, brother, Amen,"

And let me tell you, that kind of brotherhood is not just words painted on glass.

The words that I am talking about and the brotherhood I am talking of is implanted in the American tradition, of which you are a basic part. This is your country. This is our country together. It belongs to all of us.

That kind of brotherhood, practical brotherhood, that I am talking of is nourished with pride and self-respect and it is enriched and toughened by change. But it is born in the first place in the teachings of Jesus Christ, who gave us the great law that should govern our actions, underly our policy, determine our course...Jesus said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength...and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

That is the message, thank you very much.



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