

REMARKS OF
HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE
TO BE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

- - -
College Paul

Tuesday, September 17, 1968

Rochester, New York

WARD & PAUL
OFFICIAL REPORTERS
25 K STREET, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

(202) 628-4266

REMARKS OF
HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE
TO BE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

- - -

Rochester, New York,
September 17, 1968

PANEL MEMBERS:

Donald E. Williamson, University of Rochester,
530 Flint Street, Rochester, New York

Martha Jane Riley, Nazareth College,
74 East Oneida Street, Oswego, New York

Paula Janet Mary Smolski, Nazareth College,
50 Anchor Terrace, Rochester, New York

Gregory James Evans, Rochester Inst. of Technology,
606 Liberty Avenue, Endicott, New York

James J. Valone, St. John Fisher College,
1144 Clinton Avenue, N., Rochester, New York

PANEL MODERATOR:

Rev. Fr. Charles Joseph Lavery,
President, St. John Fisher College

- - -

FATHER LAVERY: Mr. Vice President, it is my very great pleasure to introduce to you a college panel representing about 15,000 students, about 30,000 in all for our greater area. I can assure you that they have many questions in mind which they wish to place before you, so I would like to present them.

Beginning at my far right, Miss Paula Smolski, a Junior at Nazareth College, Vice President of Young Democrats. She was the student coordinator for Senator Robert Kennedy. She is a resident of Rochester.

Next to her is James Valone, a Senior of St. John Fisher College, a member of our Student Advisory Commission. He, too, is a resident of this city.

1 Next to him is Martha Riley, Vice President of the
2 Young Republicans Club of Nazareth College. She comes to
3 this city from Oswego.

4 Then Don Williamson, who is a Sophomore at the
5 University of Rochester, transferred here this year from
6 Wichita State. He is a journalism major and he is a resi-
7 dent of the city.

8 Last but not least, Jim Evans, a Senior at the
9 Rochester Institute of Technology, President of the Student
10 Association there. He comes from Endicott, New York.

11 Mr. Vice President, these young people represent
12 a generation of Americans who will have very great responsi-
13 bility for the next ten years. In fact, they have very
14 great responsibilities now. As the potential leaders of
15 tomorrow, they are very concerned about their inheritance,
16 about the America in which they are going to live and hope
17 to work, to which they will make a contribution. I can
18 assure you that they have had an opportunity during the past
19 few days to discuss many issues with their fellow students,
20 and I think that their hopes and fears and concerns reflect
21 the ideas of certainly the academic community of Rochester.

22 We are very much concerned about law and order,
23 about civil rights, about urban renewal, about poverty and,
24 of course, about education. But above all, they are greatly
25 concerned about human aspirations, the desires of the heart,
of all human dignity. In a word, they are greatly concerned
with humanity.

My fellow panelists, it is a great honor to pre-
sent to you the Vice President of the United States, Mr.
Hubert Humphrey, and I would ask that he begin his discussion
with a few remarks.

Vice President Humphrey.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Father Lavery, members
of the panel, ladies and gentlemen. My first observation
is that I have done television shows in many places, but
this is the first time I have been on camera in a hanger at
an airport. I know that the conditions here are not exactly
conducive to this kind of reflective exercise, but we will
do our best.

I welcome the opportunity to receive the questions
from our distinguished, intelligent, active leaders of the
colleges and universities in this area. I have been trying
in my campaign to conduct what I call the politics of par-
ticipation. By that I mean to have people in audiences,
student leaders, business, labor, and farmer, housewife,
young and old, participate in the discussion of the problems
of our times.

It is sometimes the view of some of our people that

1 those of us in public life generally speak from prepared
2 scripts, generally written, some people think, by others.
3 I have never quite indulged in that. Maybe it would be
4 better if I would. I would possibly make fewer mistakes.

5 But I thought that in this instance, in this cam-
6 paign, because there is such a desire for dialogue and
7 there is such a desire on the part particularly of young
8 people for what I call participatory politics, that we
9 would make that possible. So without further adieu, in
10 order to best utilize the time that we have, Father Lavery,
11 I would like to take the questions of our panelists, and I
12 do so in great respect for their qualities and their ability,
13 hopeful that my answers might be worthy of their questions.

14 I will take the first question.

15 FATHER LAVERY: Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

16 I will ask Don Williamson if he would ask the first
17 question.

18 MR. WILLIAMSON: Mr. Vice President, owing to the
19 fact that you are a member of the present administration, I
20 realize that some degree of loyalty is necessary. But by
21 the very fact that you and not President Johnson are running
22 for President in November, what can you tell us will be your
23 basic difference from the administration which, at best, the
24 American public is unhappy with?

25 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, Mr. Williamson, I
have never felt that it was necessary for me to dwell on
the differences as a Democratic nominee with a Democratic
administration. I hope that you will forgive me, but I did
not think that was the way we could best conduct this
election. I have thought that it would be better if I could
state my own views and outline what I thought was necessary
for this Nation.

I have said from every platform that my desire in
the international scene is to find the way to achieve peace
in Vietnam and to find a way to slow down the arms race in
this world. I think I have some credentials in this field,
credentials as a result of some years of public life in
which I have been the main mover in sponsor of such programs
as the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, the Peace Corps, the
Disarmament Agency, having served as a delegate to the
United Nations, having served twice as an adviser to our
delegation on the Disarmament Committee in Geneva.

So I state in my own right as a candidate that
one of my objectives will be, first of all, the adoption of
the Nonproliferation Treaty. It is before the Congress now,
the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. I helped negotiate
that treaty. As a Senator, I was one of those that long
promoted such efforts. I believe this treaty is in our
national interest, in the interest of peace.

1 I will also seek the opportunity to meet with the
2 leaders of the great powers, nations that have invested
3 heavily in arms, to slow down the arms race, to reach an
4 agreement on arms control and disarmament, or some form of
5 halting the arms race in the Middle East, to accelerate the
6 development of the peacekeeping machinery of the United
7 Nations, to place a great deal of emphasis upon the U.N. as
8 a vehicle for our foreign policy, to encourage regional
9 development amongst nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin
10 America as a way to expand our peace efforts, and in Vietnam,
11 to seek hopefully, at least, when there is no danger to the
12 safety of South Vietnam or to our own troops, a reduction
13 of American forces in that area.

14 And as the platform of my party states, and I sup-
15 port that platform, a cessation of the bombing when that
16 cessation will not jeopardize the safety of our own forces
17 and when there is at least some indication of response from
18 Hanoi. I think that is a fair proposition.

19 I believe that on the domestic front, I have out-
20 lined a series of programs: the Marshall Plan for our
21 cities; a national domestic concept for our domestic programs;
22 a program of a national forum for youth, putting an office
23 in the White House for the affairs of young people, youth
24 affairs, to keep in contact with our college and younger
25 people so that they have some way to participate; programs
of expanded care for the health of our youngsters -- not
just Medicare for the elderly, but programs that help care
for the young; some very substantial improvements in our
urban programs.

So I stand on my own right. I will outline these
programs.

Now, I believe we can say that what we have done
in the past years -- not just the last four or five -- has
been good. I don't think it is enough. I think the begin-
ning we have made indicates that there is more to be done.
Part of the ferment of today in America is due to the fact
that some people see hope and they want more progress. I am
dedicated to that.

FATHER LAVERY: Greg, will you please place another
question?

MR. EVANS: Yes, thank you, Father.

Mr. Vice President, I believe it was stated in
last week's Time Magazine that your people feel that Governor
Wallace will help you by taking votes from Mr. Nixon. First,
why do you feel that it is going to hurt him and not you?

Secondly, it is the feeling of our constituents
of the four area colleges of Rochester that the majority of
them are leaning toward Mr. Nixon. Most of them were
McCarthy supporters. Why do you feel this is happening, and

1 what are you going to do to get the college people on your
2 side?

3 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Let't take the first
4 part of your question. The first part was that Mr. Wallace
5 was going to take more votes from Mr. Nixon according to
6 what? Would you mind giving me the first part again?

7 MR. EVANS: That the candidacy of Governor Wallace
8 for President would help you by taking more votes from Mr.
9 Nixon.

10 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Who said that?

11 MR. EVANS: I believe it was Time Magazine.

12 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Time Magazine doesn't run
13 my campaign. I have a respect for that fine weekly, but it
14 is made of mainly views and opinions based on observations.

15 It is my view that Mr. Wallace is making inroads
16 in both Mr. Nixon's followers and mine. It is my view that
17 Mr. Wallace is not good for this country. It is my view
18 that Mr. Wallace's candidacy represents nothing but reversion
19 to the past, separatism in this country, at a time when we
20 need a pulling of our people together, when we need integra-
21 tion, when we need a total abolition of segregation.

22 I can only say one thing of Mr. Wallace's candidacy.
23 I think it is bad news for the United States.

24 Now, on the second matter, as to some of the young
25 people on the campuses, as you have indicated, who might
support Mr. Nixon, particularly some of the McCarthy sup-
porters -- that, of course, is their right. I can't imagine
how they feel that would be helpful to their cause. Most
of the McCarthy supporters had strong views about the war in
Vietnam. I have never known Mr. Nixon to be a dove, if we
can use the parlance of the day. And I would hope that those
who classify themselves as liberals in politics are not one-
issue people.

I would hope that those who feel that they have the
sense of compassion for humanity would take a look at the
record of myself and Mr. Nixon and make a comparison. I
cannot believe that the goals, the lofty ideals of the
young people who supported Mr. McCarthy are going to be
realized by the election of Mr. Nixon.

I can understand how they may be angry. We have
all been angry at some time in our lives. I can understand
how they might be disappointed. But I think it is imperative
that all of us understand that our alternatives are not al-
ways between perfection and total imperfection. The alter-
natives are between human beings and individuals, between
platforms and men and issues on the basis of the record.

Therefore, I will direct my attention to young
people, supporters of Mr. McCarthy, Mr. McGovern, and myself,
on the basis of trying to build a society here in America

1 that is worthy of young people, recognizing that -- well,
2 for example, that the nonproliferation treaty is in the in-
3 terest of young people. You are going to live longer than
4 I am. If the spread of nuclear weapons continues, your
5 life is that much more uncertain.

6 Mr. Nixon says we ought to hold up on that treaty.
7 I say we ought to sign it. I think it is in the interest of
8 humanity. I think we either halt the arms race or we are
9 going to halt humanity.

10 I think the war in Vietnam is ugly, difficult,
11 painful, and costly. The war in Vietnam is not nearly as
12 dangerous to all of humanity as the spiraling nuclear arms
13 race between separate powers. I think it is essential that
14 young men and women stop reacting with their emotions and
15 start thinking with their intelligence -- namely, what is
16 the greater danger?

17 The greater danger is the spread of these powerful
18 weapons of destruction in the hands of people who are
19 totally unreliable and emotional, that could obliterate all
20 of mankind.

21 I might add that Mr. Nixon does not seem to like
22 our war on poverty. Mr. Nixon doesn't seem to agree with
23 our federal aid to education program. Mr. Nixon didn't
24 support Medicare. Mr. Nixon hadn't had much interest in
25 some of the things we have been doing, for example, in con-
sumer legislation. I think young people are interested in
that.

He didn't support aid to higher education. There
are thousands of young men and women in college today be-
cause a President cared, because a government cared, because
a party cared. I can't for the life of me believe that
young people will become so impassioned on what, on whether
Mr. Nixon is more of a hawk than I, than anybody in this
administration, as to cast their vote for Mr. Nixon, who is
the man who wanted to go to Vietnam in 1954 and had to be
literally chastised by his own President; the man who
wanted to send armed forces to Southeast Asia in 1954.

If that is the kind of thinking of people who say
they are liberals, progressives, lovers of peace, then I
must say we are living in a very confused world. I can't
believe it.

Frankly, I can't find much of it. I find a few
people who are still perfectly willing to hang on and to
feel that they were denied, and they have many reasons to
feel like that. I find a few like that.

But I find, for example, that when I was in the
State of Michigan, the head of the McCarthy group supporting
me, introduced me to an audience. I find Steven Mitchell,
the Chairman of Senator McCarthy's effort, one of my vice

1 chairmen of my citizens committees -- I find them all over
2 the United States. I consider that many people are not so
3 much for McCarthy that are acting the way you are talking
4 about as they are for themselves.

5 I might say if people are going to picket for
6 peace, why don't they give us all a little of it, instead of
7 keeping it all on one candidate?

8 Next?

9 FATHER LAVERY: Martha Riley?

10 MISS RILEY: Mr. Vice President, I would like to
11 know just how you intend to pay for all these programs that
12 you are supporting. You want to increase all this aid and
13 welfare, and I would like to know just how you intend to
14 pay for this. Are the taxes going to be raised? Just what
15 are you going to do?

16 It seems to me the present administration hasn't
17 been able to balance the budget at all, and you have been
18 part of this administration.

19 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes.

20 MISS RILEY: I would like to see us balance the
21 budget for a change, and just know where the money is going,
22 to whom, and know that the middle class people aren't paying
23 for everything.

24 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes.

25 First of all, may I say that the only tax reductions
you have had in the last ten or twelve years have come from
Democratic administrations. That is the first fact. We
have had three tax reductions since 1964. We had one tax
reduction from 1953 to 1960, 1961. That was built into the
law. There wasn't anything they could do about it. It
automatically came off by date.

I remember the tax bill. I was in the Congress at
the time. I remember those eight years of Republicanism --
three recessions, mass unemployment, up to 7 per cent of
the work force.

I also remember that there were all the poor that
there are now and more, all the illiterates that there are
now and more, all the problems in the cities that we have
now and more. And I remember that nothing was done about
them.

I know that these sores were left to fester in
American life. They were ignored: three recessions, \$175
billion of lost income from lost employment. That was the
price of eight years of not facing up to the facts. Only
one tax reduction, compelled by law.

This administration has given us three tax re-
ductions, not compelled by law, but three tax reductions
on the initiative of the President and the Congress. And
one little modest tax increase called the surtax, which is

1 a very small tax indeed in terms of a tax reduction. The
2 tax reduction still remains approximately \$15 billion.

3 Had we maintained the same tax rates that the
4 Republicans left us with, we would have had a balanced
5 budget, but we did not. We relied upon this economy. We
6 put the money back into private hands.

7 Republicans talk about private enterprise, but we
8 put the money back into private enterprise. We said it is
9 better for the private enterprise sector to get this money
10 back for tax reductions, for investments, to keep this
11 economy going, than it is for the government to have it.

12 We have had ninety months of consecutive prosperity,
13 ninety consecutive months without a recession. We have had
14 approximately \$80 or \$90 billion of gross national product.
15 The index of inflation under this administration is, on the
16 wholesale price index, .1 per cent higher than it was in
17 eight years of Republicanism, 9.2 as compared to 9.3. Despite
18 Vietnam, despite the fact of all the programs we have had.

19 I submit that these programs have done a great
20 deal for our country. The wealth of this country is in its
21 people. Family income has increased 32 per cent under the
22 Democrats. It increased 9 per cent in eight years under
23 Republicans. It went up, unemployment went up two million
24 under the Republicans, went down two million under the
25 Democrats. Ten million people have come out of poverty in
this last administration, ten million of them.

Corporate profits remained rather static under the
Republicans. Isn't that interesting? Businessmen had
corporate profits remaining rather static. They have
doubled under this administration.

Wages have gone up.

I must say if we are going to debate the
Republican and Democratic politics on the basis of the
economy, we have a mighty good case.

How are we going to pay for these programs, by an
expanding economy. We increase by \$25 million our revenue
each year without increasing our taxes. How? By increasing
the productivity of the American people, so that if new
money is needed to train the unemployed, to start getting
at the problems of the ghetto, to start helping more stu-
dents into college, into elementary and secondary education,
that new money comes out of the growth of this economy. It
is what we call social dividends. There isn't any new
money when you have recessions.

Speaking of middle-income people, they are the ones
that suffer from recessions. They are the ones that are
frequently laid off from jobs. They can't pay their mortgage
payments, can't take care of their debts.

This Democratic administration has been a boon for

1 the middle-income people, because the increase in the
2 middle-income group is substantially higher than it is in
any other group. So I think we have a pretty good case.

3 FATHER LAVERY: Paula Smolski?

4 MISS SMOLSKI: Mr. Vice President, how is your
idea of law and order similar to that of Mayor Daley's?

5 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: How does my idea of law
and order --

6 MISS SMOLSKI: Compare with Mayor Daley's?

7 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Every mayor has his
8 problems. I have been watching Mayor Lindsay of New York
with the disturbances that were at Columbia University, and
I watched, at least for a few moments, what happened in
Chicago. I must say that both mayors have their hands full,
have had their hands full.

9 I was a mayor of a large city myself. I have some
appreciation of the problems that they face. I would like
to speak of my ideas on law and order.

10 First of all, law and order costs money. Mr. Nixon
11 has talked about law and order, but he hasn't said how he is
going to pay for it. I have said you have to have extra
funds, you have to pay your policemen more. The average
12 policeman gets two-thirds of a living wage. Yet he has to
keep peace in your community and you want him to be honest.

13 You have to professionalize your police force.
You ask a social worker who works in a city to have a
14 college education. You ask a librarian to have a college
education. You ask a public health officer or visiting
15 nurse to have a college education. You don't ask that of a
police officer. Your recruiting standards are much lower.

16 If you want better police, more disciplined
17 police, police that do not engage in police brutality, you
have to pick them better. You have to have higher standards,
you have to train them better, you have to give them better
18 equipment.

19 As John Kennedy said, peace and freedom are not
cheap. I think law and order are not cheap.

20 I think this country owes a debt to its police.
They are the most disciplined group in this land. Without
21 them, we wouldn't have much going for us today, and they
have suffered a great deal. I am one of their defenders,
because to me, they have been underpaid, underdeveloped,
22 undertrained.

23 What else is there in law and order? By the way,
it is going to cost more money -- state help, local govern-
24 ment, federal government. Most of the cities can't support
that. They don't have the tax base for that, so the
federal government is going to have to come in with some
25 grants in aid. It won't take too much, but a little extra

1 will help. Training is needed.

2 But there is something else in law and order --
3 justice. I do not say -- Mr. Nixon says that he wanted to
4 double the rate of convictions. He said Mr. Humphrey wants
5 to double the poverty program. Mr. Humphrey believes there
6 ought to be convictions of people who are guilty. Mr.
7 Nixon has never had to enforce a law. I have. I have been
8 mayor of a city. I have had to run a police department, be
9 responsible for it. I trained it, modernized it, paid it,
10 saw to it that it had something worthwhile.

11 But there is something else besides doubling con-
12 victions. I gather if you double convictions, Mr. Nixon is
13 saying he prefers to build penitentiaries, jails. But I
14 will tell you something that you need more than jails: you
15 need better schools, better hospitals, you need better
16 housing. To every penitentiary that Mr. Nixon wants to
17 build, and I gather that he does, I prefer to build a better
18 neighborhood for you to live in.

19 (Applause.)

20 FATHER LAVERY: Mr. Vice President, the last
21 question will come from James Valone.

22 MR. VALONE: Thank you, Father.

23 Mr. Vice President, I am one young person among
24 many young people who will, for the first time, vote in the
25 presidential election. Frankly, I am worried. The late
President Kennedy inspired the best in us, to go out and do
something for our Nation and for the world. Mr. Nixon and
Mr. Wallace are playing upon fears in the American public,
and they offer us nothing. We are still waiting to hear
from you the challenge which you have to offer us.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I want to offer you a
challenge. I tried to today, up in a university in Buffalo.
All my life, I have worked with young people, as a teacher,
a student, a professor, in politics. I think they are the
reason for living. They give us something that makes you
feel good to be with them.

I see many troubled young people today, and I can
understand why. They know our country is rich, they know
that is not enough. They know we have fabulous machines,
but they are asking the question, is the man for the machine
or is the machine for the man.

They have been born in war, called in war. They
have had a tremendous period of affluence, which many of us
of an older generation never enjoyed. But affluence and
wealth are not enough, because man does not live by bread
alone. We have learned that. He isn't satisfied.

What do I have to offer you? Challenge. You are
needed. You are not needed carrying signs; you are needed
in a mental health institution. You are needed in a mental

1 retardation center. You are needed in tutorial work in the
2 ghettos. You are needed on the playground.

3 We couldn't get supervisors this summer for our
4 playgrounds. We opened up thousands of playgrounds this
5 summer, looking for young people to help us.

6 You are needed in boys camps, you are needed in
7 homes for the elderly, you are needed in government, you are
8 needed in politics. You are just needed.

9 My challenge to you is not that it is easy, but
10 that it is difficult. You are going to be needed in the
11 social services. We need hundreds of volunteers these days,
12 hundreds of thousands of them for many of the great institu-
13 tions of municipal and state and federal governments, for
14 voluntary agencies.

15 I know camps for crippled children can't get enough
16 help. I know hospitals today that are without adequate
17 people, without adequate personnel. Now, that is social
18 service.

19 The new politics is the politics of service, not
20 the politics of demonstrations; the politics of service.
21 The new politics for young people is the politics of par-
22 ticipation -- not participation on the street, but partici-
23 pation in things that count. That is what I offer to you.

24 What else do I offer to you? I ask you to help
25 me cleanse this country of its bigotry, of the practices
of discrimination, of racism which grips this country in
many areas. I ask you to speak up.

The first place to practice the art of peace is at
home. If we can't practice the art of peace amongst our
own people at home, what makes you think we can bring peace
to the world?

The first place to practice the war on poverty is
at home. What makes you think we can save the people of
India and Pakistan when we can't save our own people that
speak a common language?

The first place to be concerned about education is
at home. That is what we are talking about to the young
people of today. I ask you to rise to new heights of social
service in this country, to think in terms of how a -- how
you better can be utilized.

I say to every university, to every university
faculty, every student, make yourself a part of the action
in your community. I know it is better to talk about what
you can do about Vietnam, but you are not there. Most of
the students in universities are not going to get there
under the present draft laws.

May I say that today, the place to get into the
action is where you live. You build a better world starting
in your own home, starting in your own college; you build a

1 better world starting in your own home, starting in your own
2 college; you build a better world starting in your own com-
3 munity. You build a better America starting in your own
4 city, and so on up the line.

5 I believe this is a great opportunity, and I intend
6 to call young people to action to see that it gets done --
7 in the Peace Corps, in the voluntary service, in the teachers
8 corps. We need hundreds of young people in the teachers
9 corps. We need you in VISTA. We need you in the war on
10 poverty.

11 I know these are not very dramatic things, but that
12 is where you are needed. That is where the energy ought to
13 go.

14 I call upon the fraternities of the colleges to
15 pledge hundreds of manhours to the needs of their towns, to
16 the needs of the disenfranchised, and of the needy and de-
17 prived.

18 That is my program for you. I hope you can help me.

19 FATHER LAVERY: Mr. Vice President, speaking for
20 the panel and all the students who represent this area, I
21 would like to thank you most sincerely for being with us, for
22 helping these young people search for answers to very import-
23 ant questions.

24 Thank you very much.

25 - - -



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