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Transcript of remarks by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey at a Meeting with the staff of the United States Mission to the United Nations, New York, November 26, 1968.

AMBASSADOR BUFFUM: Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that you are all as delighted and happy as I am to have the very distinct privilege, pleasure and honor of an unexpected visit this morning from the Vice President of the United States.

The Vice President.

(Applause.)

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

I was staying at the Waldorf last evening, **just** down the hall from Ambassador Wiggins, and I found out that he was suffering from a bit of a cold. I thought I was catching it so I decided I'd better get out of there and see if I couldn't come over here and say hello to some friends.

I read in the morning press that my good friend, Senator Symington, was here and I found out that Senator Cooper is here and many others of our delegation who are friends. So I thought, if you didn't mind, I'd just come over and see if I could get a free lunch somewhere along the way and have a chance to say hello to old friends and people with whom I have had the privilege of working several years, at least, of my public life.

I can't think of any place that is more congenial for public service, more helpful in bringing the best out of people, than in the United States Mission to the United Nations. This is a wonderful opportunity that you have and it is one that I once enjoyed some time ago during a very critical period of our national life. I was here, I believe, Joe (Sisco), in 1956-1957. Mr. Pedersen was also here at that time. We settled most of the problems, as you can plainly see, because the world is in such a tranquil state, with such serenity.

This morning I was visiting on the telephone with some of our colleagues in Congress. I was talking to Congressman James Wright of Texas just before I left and I said, "Jim, I am going to have to break off this call because I am due over at the United States Mission to the United Nations."

He said, "What are you doing there?"

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"Well," I said, "I didn't have very much to do for an hour or so, until I meet some members of my family who are going to join me here, and I thought I would go over and settle the problems of the Middle East, take a look at some of the difficulties in Eastern Europe, and possibly find an immediate solution to the problems of Southeast Asia," and that would permit all of you to have a good long weekend over Thanksgiving.

But I, in all seriousness, know that this body to which you give your attention -- and I refer now to the United Nations -- is still what some of its authors and its founding fathers thought it would be, the last best hope for the attainment of a just and an enduring peace.

I hope that you recognize, as I am sure you do, that this process of building the peace is a very difficult one. No one ought to know more about that than the people in the United Nations because here you see the full crossfire of all the contesting points of view in the world, as well as all of the many cultures of the world.

But what greater work is there than giving yourself, if it may only be in what you consider to be a minor capacity, to the cause of world peace and better understanding. I think I should have said better understanding and world peace, because you do not get the peace without the understanding.

Now I have only a few more weeks of public life, at least temporarily, and I intend to make the most of it as I have tried to do with my life all the time. On January 20th, at high noon, there will be a new Vice-President and there will be a new President. On that day I will step into private life.

I have been wrestling with that decision. I think I have it pretty well shaped in my mind what I am going to do, and I intend to be quasi-public. I think that's the best way to put it. Paid a little better than I was in public life, I hope, and a little freer than I was in public life. But also to have the uplift and the input of ideas and creative thought that make you a better man. There is no particular secret about this. I have always enjoyed teaching. I have always enjoyed being with people in the academic and intellectual world. I think that a man who has spent twenty years in Washington and four years in municipal government possibly needs to have his spirit refreshed. He might even need to have it fully ventilated. And he surely needs to have his mind reinvigorated and made a more vital instrument for thought and reason. This is what I intend to do, along with some other things. I will spell it out in a little more detail, if any of you should be interested, at an appropriate time.

But I want to leave you with this: I have had the most wonderful experience that any man could ever hope for. I have had the opportunity to be in business, a very small business, as a young man; to teach, to be a professor in the fields of social sciences,

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political science; to be a mayor of a great city; to be somewhat acquainted with the problems of urban life -- and they are much different now and more difficult than they were when I was mayor; to be a senator of the United States of America, which I think is one of the greatest positions that anybody could ever have, good enough so that I may look upon it again with some longing eyes; and to be Vice-President of these United States of America for four years. That's a remarkable experience. I hope that I have made the most of it. I have tried to.

I know that I have learned a great deal and I also know that I have been rewarded time after time with precious friendships, with exciting experiences, with the lessons that you learn from difficulty -- very few lessons are learned from ease; most of them come from difficulty and pain.

I have had the chance to see Presidents at work close at hand; like the opportunity that some of you here in this room have had to see the great leaders of other countries of the world, to see them as human beings as well as names in the press or as personalities, and they are oftentimes quite a little different.

And I have had the opportunity to see this country. I want you to think about that, because while the United Nations is very important, one of the most important influences in the United Nations is the country that you represent, and you represent it in any work that you do as much as the Ambassador.

I have been to every state in this Union, not once but several times, and I know that I have been to every city of any major size, to know its people, to see it physically, to sense its purpose, its vitality and its problems. And I feel that I am just chuck-full with Americana. I mean that I just feel it over me and I like it.

Then I had the privilege of being the standard bearer of my party in quite an interesting experience and in quite an interesting election. It was about as good as a race as you will see for some time. Insofar, at least, as the moments of anxiety. I often said in jest, and I say it in jest, that I was nosed out by a nose (laughter).

But I think it is fair to say that we had a very highly competitive political exercise here, called our campaign. Many people were worrying that our processes of government were going to deteriorate and fall apart. I read all these prophets of doom and gloom as to what would happen and what didn't happen. The Republic survives. The constitutional system is intact. It can always be changed or amended for the better.

The Congress will reconvene -- the 91st Congress. The President will leave office and the Vice-President will do it

peacefully -- not voluntarily, but peacefully. A new President and a new Vice-President will come in, and I have a feeling that we will do quite well. And I intend, insofar as I can, to be of as much help as a member of the loyal opposition can be. I am not a carping critic. I should like to be a constructive companion, and I believe that we can be helpful in the months ahead. We are going to need to help each other in this country a great deal.

Well Joe, I tried to be as precise as the State Department language will permit me, and I have tried to be as long in speech as the United Nations speech will permit me. And now I want to say thank you.

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