

Remarks by The Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey on
Metromedia Radio Interview, February 20, 1970.

MR. BLACKBURN: If I can touch on a domestic matter here, this week, the trial in Chicago that resulted from the violence at the Democratic National Convention in 1968 came to an end. There has been a great deal of criticism of some of the actions of Judge Hoffman in that trial, and there's also been criticism of the actions of some of the defendants. Would you comment on how you think that trial was conducted and what it reflects, if anything, about our judicial system?

PROFESSOR HUMPHREY: I think your analysis of the trial is a rather accurate one. There's been criticism of the manner in which the Court has conducted the proceedings of the trial. And there has been obvious criticism, and I think justified, of the actions of the defendants - and particularly the defendants' counsel in the trial.

The only group that's come out of this trial worthy of commendation at all is the jury. The jury had to go through a long ordeal. We have a jury system in this country, and it's important that we protect it. And I support that jury system. I think that we must not let anything downgrade it or degrade it. The jury in this case deliberated over a long period of time and under great duress, and reached a verdict. In light of the law on which they had to base their verdict, I have reason to respect the wisdom of that verdict.

I think the law involved here is highly questionable in terms of its validity, but this must be decided by the Courts. I am not a jurist, or even a lawyer, sir, but I am not at all sure that the conspiracy act will withstand the test of an appeal to the Supreme Court. And I am sure it will come. And what is the other one, the Rap Brown Amendment - I guess there is another title for it - on matters of inciting violence. I have never been sure that we ought to have Federal law dealing with this. It seems to me that states have plenty of laws to deal with violence.

And states should deal with violence. This is essentially a local matter. When you start writing law that says that if you move

from one state to another and make a speech, even though it may be a speech only in protest or dissent, and then some violence results from it, and that you are under a Federal penalty, you're really tampering with the First Amendment.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I think that what's been going on in Chicago from the day of the Democratic Convention right on up to now is anything but a desirable display of American good habits and good manners. In fact, there are lots of things you can be very unhappy about, including the actions of those who were protesting and the actions of the police. This is a sad story in America. I must say that it is a sad situation. But what I worry about now is that there seems to be a kind of a determined effort to downgrade the judicial process of this country, and to disrupt it. And I have a feeling that this trial in Chicago is making martyrs out of people that do not deserve martyrdom. And it may result in a lot more trouble.

So I would suggest that lawyers who are concerned about due process of law, and minorities who have had to look, through the years, to the courts for protection, must try to uphold the standards of the judicial process. And I also would suggest that this apply to the people in the courts, the judges, and the attorneys, the prosecutors and the defending attorneys. These people have a special responsibility.

And going back specifically to your question, I think you will find that this litigation will continue for some time. And ultimately it will come to the higher courts, and I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what the Supreme Court will throw the whole thing out.

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The Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey
1510 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Humphrey:

Enclosed is the taped copy of the interview you did on our Profile program. I sent the transcript to Caryl Connor.

I think the program went very well and I hope that you were pleased. I certainly enjoyed talking with you again and only regret that we can't get together more often. From the response of the people in our offices, I think you could win an election here for czar!

Again, my sincere thanks for your co-operation.

Warmest Regards,



Dan Blackburn
National Editor



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