

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

ACCEPTANCE OF THE JOSEPH PRIZE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Anti-Defamation League, B'nai Brith

New York, New York

November 9, 1975

I deeply appreciate what has been said here today. I am doubly honored by your award of the Joseph Prize.

First, because it is your organization that honors me. Second, by the stature of the individual with whom I am privileged to share this high honor.

To be honored by the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai Brith is a particular pleasure because of my long and warm relationship with your splendid organization.

We first worked together when I was Mayor of Minneapolis in the drafting of the nation's first municipal anti-discrimination legislation.

And the ADL's officers, staff and members have assisted the progressive forces in the Congress during the past decades.

I know of few organizations which have so consistently represented the values which make this country great: a free, vibrant, open society in which all men and women are free to make the most of their God-given potential.

I am profoundly moved tonight by being honored together with one of the moral giants of our generation -- my dear friend and mentor, Roy Wilkins.

Over 2500 years ago, the Great Hebrew prophet, Micha, declared that man's mission on earth was to "love mercy, pursue justice and walk humbly with God."

There are few Americans who have so epitomized this change -- few men who have toiled as diligently on behalf of these goals -- as Roy Wilkins.

Roy Wilkins has given us inspiration to move forward, example to do right and leadership in the long struggle for human dignity.

To be honored with him is a tribute I will always cherish.

I could not accept this award without sharing with you some of my thoughts on where we have been and where we are going in our quest for human rights.

Since the end of the Second World War we have worked long and hard to remove a host of legal barriers to civil equality and equal opportunity in America.

In the 1950's and 1960's we were working on a civil rights and a human rights agenda which was uniquely suited to legislative solutions and remedies.

We overcame great hurdles in Congress and in our state legislatures to achieve our goals -- equal access to public accommodations, equal job opportunity, non-discriminatory use of Federal funds and greater protection of the right to vote.

But I do not accept the proposition that most Americans believe that two centuries of racial injustice and religious bigotry have somehow vanished from this land.

The struggle is not over. Hard-won progress on the human rights front which is now protected by the courts and safeguarded by our laws marks a beginning, not an end to the battle for human rights.

Yes, the battle field has shifted. It is no longer solely in the halls of Congress or in the courts.

It is now in the neighborhoods of inner city and suburb, the schools of our nation, the factories and shops, the homes and the hearts of the American people.

Let me be frank. In 1975, threats to human freedom cannot be eradicated by the passage of laws. Yes, legislation may help in some instances. But in many cases, there is no better solution than a human one. You and I know that the battle for human rights must now be waged vigorously in the hearts and minds of the American people.

And for this, we need leadership which speaks firmly in the name of all the people.

We need leaders who say that anti-semitism in corporate suites or government offices will never be tolerated.

We need leaders who say that women who work should receive equal pay for their labor.

We need leaders who will not tell black Americans, Jewish Americans, Hispanic Americans, Italian Americans or any other group to submerge or ignore their individual identity or heritage.

We need leaders who say that the very young and the very old in our nation have the same right of protection under the law as the rest of society.

And we need leaders who have the courage to say that there can be no meaningful freedom in America without freedom from poverty and hunger -- freedom from the unemployment line and the welfare check.

We have learned that it is not enough to allow a man or woman to sit at a lunch counter if they don't have the money in their pockets to pay for lunch.

I believe that the right to full participation in the economic life of our nation is the birthright of every American.

Until we guarantee this freedom to all of our citizens, we cannot call ourselves truly free.

Lastly, it is important to note that the struggle for human rights knows no national boundaries. We cannot cry out for the oppressed in one area of the world and remain silent because of political expediency and power politics. The dark reign of imprisonment without trial, torture and denial of the basic human rights is becoming commonplace throughout the world. America has the moral obligation to speak out against such practices wherever and whenever they occur.

And let me say that when the ugly head of religious bigotry and racial hatred is raised in the United Nations, we must bitterly oppose it.

I could not come here and accept this award without saying that the President's refusal to aid this great city is a heartless, divisive act which only weakens the fabric of national life. The human problems of America need to be solved and many of them are urban related.

Lurking behind the speeches of Gerald Ford and the negativism of William Simon is an attitude of malignant neglect -- an attitude which ignores the problems of the poor, the black, and the Spanish speaking who inhabit the inner city here and in other cities around the nation.

All of us here have a special obligation. It is one of leadership for human rights. We must not be lulled into complacency by our past victories.

The challenges which we face are enormous. But we can move mountains -- I am confident of that.

Let us work together so that America's third century can be one of new beginnings -- new beginnings toward better understanding among Americans of all races, religious and creeds.

Let us proudly work to achieve freedom for all Americans so that our nation can proclaim to the world that we are "one nation, under God, indivisible."

#

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

ACCEPTANCE OF THE JOSEPH PRIZE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE, B'NAI BRITH

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

NOVEMBER 9, 1975

I DEEPLY APPRECIATE WHAT HAS BEEN SAID HERE TODAY,

I AM DOUBLY HONORED BY YOUR AWARD OF THE JOSEPH PRIZE for Human Rights

First, BECAUSE IT IS YOUR ORGANIZATION THAT HONORS ME,

Second, BY THE character, reputation and quality,
STATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL WITH WHOM I AM

PRIVILEGED TO SHARE THIS HIGH HONOR - Roy Welkins.

Joseph Prize - J.S. Joseph family -

TO BE HONORED BY THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE OF THE

B'NAI BRITH IS A PARTICULAR PLEASURE BECAUSE OF MY LONG

AND WARM RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR SPLENDID ORGANIZATION.

WE FIRST WORKED TOGETHER WHEN I WAS MAYOR OF MINNEAPOLIS

IN THE DRAFTING OF THE NATION'S FIRST MUNICIPAL

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION.

AND THE ADL'S OFFICERS, STAFF AND MEMBERS HAVE ASSISTED

THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES IN THE CONGRESS DURING THE PAST DECADES.

L I KNOW OF FEW ORGANIZATIONS WHICH HAVE SO CONSISTENTLY

REPRESENTED THE VALUES WHICH MAKE THIS COUNTRY GREAT; A

FREE, VIBRANT, OPEN SOCIETY IN WHICH ALL MEN AND WOMEN ARE

FREE TO MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL.

L I AM PROFOUNDLY MOVED ~~TO~~ BY BEING HONORED TOGETHER

WITH ONE OF THE MORAL GIANTS OF OUR GENERATION -- MY DEAR

FRIEND AND MENTOR, ROY WILKINS.

h OVER 2500 YEARS AGO, THE GREAT HEBREW PROPHET, MICHA,

DECLARED THAT MAN'S MISSION ON EARTH WAS TO "LOVE MERCY,

PURSU JUSTICE AND WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD."

L THERE ARE FEW AMERICANS WHO HAVE SO EPITOMIZED THIS

CHANGE -- FEW MEN WHO HAVE TOILED AS DILIGENTLY ON BEHALF

OF THESE GOALS -- AS ROY WILKINS.

L ROY WILKINS HAS GIVEN US INSPIRATION TO MOVE FORWARD, Precept and

EXAMPLE TO DO RIGHT AND LEADERSHIP IN THE LONG STRUGGLE

== , ==) ==
FOR HUMAN DIGNITY.

L TO BE HONORED WITH HIM IS A TRIBUTE I WILL ALWAYS

CHERISH.

L I COULD NOT ACCEPT THIS AWARD WITHOUT SHARING WITH YOU

SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ON WHERE WE HAVE BEEN AND WHERE WE ARE

unending struggle
GOING IN OUR ~~QUEST~~ FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

L SINCE THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR WE HAVE WORKED

LONG AND HARD TO REMOVE A HOST OF LEGAL BARRIERS TO CIVIL

EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA.

L IN THE 1950'S AND 1960'S WE WERE WORKING ON A CIVIL

RIGHTS AND A HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA WHICH WAS UNIQUELY SUITED

TO LEGISLATIVE SOLUTIONS AND REMEDIES.

L WE OVERCAME GREAT HURDLES IN CONGRESS AND IN OUR
STATE LEGISLATURES TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS -- EQUAL ACCESS
TO PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, EQUAL JOB OPPORTUNITY,
NON-DISCRIMINATORY USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS AND GREATER
PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

L BUT, I DO NOT ACCEPT THE PROPOSITION THAT MOST
AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT TWO CENTURIES OF RACIAL INJUSTICE
AND RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY HAVE SOMEHOW VANISHED FROM THIS LAND.


L THE STRUGGLE IS ~~FOR~~ ^{far from over.} ~~FOR~~ HARD-WON PROGRESS ON THE
HUMAN RIGHTS FRONT WHICH IS NOW PROTECTED BY THE COURTS
AND SAFEGUARDED BY OUR LAWS MARKS A BEGINNING, NOT AN END
TO THE BATTLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

~~YES~~ L THE BATTLE FIELD HAS SHIFTED. L IT IS NO LONGER
SOLELY IN THE HALLS OF CONGRESS OR IN THE COURTS.

~~We must~~

- ⑩ It is not enough to say we believe in the Constitution and Bill of Rights. We must be on guard against and vigorously opposed to the Abuse of Power by Government which violates civil liberties and the basic rights of the people. Likewise, we cannot accept nor condone the callous indifference of public officials who fail to champion the cause of Human Rights.

L IT IS NOW IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF INNER CITY AND
SUBURB, THE SCHOOLS OF OUR NATION, THE FACTORIES AND SHOPS, *The Market Place*
THE HOMES AND THE HEARTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

L LET ME BE FRANK. IN 1975, THREATS TO HUMAN FREEDOM
CANNOT BE ERADICATED BY THE PASSAGE OF LAWS. YES, LEGISLATION
MAY HELP IN SOME INSTANCES. BUT IN MANY CASES, THERE IS NO
BETTER SOLUTION THAN A HUMAN ONE. YOU AND I KNOW THAT THE
BATTLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS MUST NOW BE WAGED VIGOROUSLY IN THE
HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. 

L ~~AND FOR THIS~~ WE NEED LEADERSHIP WHICH SPEAKS FIRMLY
not leaders who.
IN THE NAME OF ALL THE PEOPLE -

L WE NEED LEADERS WHO SAY THAT ANTI-SEMITISM IN CORPORATE
SUITES OR GOVERNMENT OFFICES WILL NEVER BE TOLERATED.

L WE NEED LEADERS WHO SAY THAT WOMEN WHO WORK SHOULD
RECEIVE EQUAL PAY FOR THEIR LABOR.

L WE NEED LEADERS WHO WILL NOT TELL BLACK AMERICANS,
JEWISH AMERICANS, HISPANIC AMERICANS, ITALIAN AMERICANS, ~~OR~~ OR
ANY OTHER GROUP TO SUBMERGE OR IGNORE THEIR INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY
OR HERITAGE.

L WE NEED LEADERS WHO SAY THAT THE VERY YOUNG AND THE VERY
OLD IN OUR NATION HAVE THE SAME RIGHT OF PROTECTION UNDER THE
LAW AS THE REST OF SOCIETY.

L AND WE NEED LEADERS WHO HAVE THE COURAGE TO SAY THAT
THERE CAN BE NO MEANINGFUL FREEDOM IN AMERICA WITHOUT
FREEDOM FROM POVERTY AND HUNGER -- FREEDOM FROM THE UNEMPLOYMENT
LINE AND THE WELFARE CHECK.

L WE HAVE LEARNED THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO ALLOW A MAN OR
WOMAN TO SIT AT A LUNCH COUNTER IF THEY DON'T HAVE THE MONEY
IN THEIR POCKETS TO PAY FOR LUNCH.

L I BELIEVE THAT THE RIGHT TO FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE *Social and*
ECONOMIC LIFE OF OUR NATION IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF EVERY AMERICAN.

L UNTIL WE GUARANTEE THIS FREEDOM TO ALL OF OUR CITIZENS,
WE CANNOT CALL OURSELVES TRULY FREE.

~~IR~~
L LASTLY, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS KNOWS NO NATIONAL BOUNDARIES. WE CANNOT CRY
OUT FOR THE OPPRESSED IN ONE AREA OF THE WORLD AND REMAIN
SILENT BECAUSE OF POLITICAL EXPENDIENCY AND POWER POLITICS.

L THE DARK REIGN OF IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL, TORTURE AND
DENIAL OF THE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS IS BECOMING COMMONPLACE
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. AMERICA HAS THE MORAL OBLIGATION TO
SPEAK OUT AGAINST SUCH PRACTICES WHEREVER AND WHENEVER THEY OCCUR.

Proud of Patrick Moynihan
- Clarence Mitchell
- Leonard Garment

House of Repres
U.S. Senate
President

AND LET ME SAY THAT WHEN THE UGLY HEAD OF RELIGIOUS

BIGOTRY AND RACIAL HATRED IS RAISED IN THE UNITED NATIONS ^{or any}
of its agencies

we MUST BITTERLY OPPOSE IT.

I COULD NOT COME HERE AND ACCEPT THIS AWARD WITHOUT

SAYING THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REFUSAL TO AID THIS GREAT CITY

IS A HEARTLESS, DIVISIVE ACT WHICH ONLY WEAKENS THE FABRIC

OF NATIONAL LIFE. THE HUMAN PROBLEMS OF AMERICA NEED TO

BE SOLVED AND MANY OF THEM ARE URBAN RELATED.

at a minimum
our government and
our leaders must
care about these
concerns,
and care
to they.

LURKING BEHIND THE SPEECHES OF GERALD FORD AND THE

NEGATIVISM OF WILLIAM SIMON IS AN ATTITUDE OF MALIGNANT

NEGLECT -- AN ATTITUDE WHICH IGNORES THE PROBLEMS OF THE

The American Indian
POOR, THE BLACK, AND THE SPANISH SPEAKING WHO INHABIT THE

INNER CITY HERE AND IN OTHER CITIES AROUND THE NATION.

L ALL OF US HERE HAVE A SPECIAL OBLIGATION L IT IS ONE OF
LEADERSHIP FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WE MUST NOT BE LULLED INTO
COMPLACENCY BY OUR PAST VICTORIES.

L THE CHALLENGES WHICH WE FACE ARE ENORMOUS L BUT WE CAN
MOVE MOUNTAINS -- I AM CONFIDENT OF THAT.

L LET US WORK TOGETHER SO THAT AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY
CAN BE ONE OF NEW BEGINNINGS -- NEW BEGINNINGS TOWARD BETTER
UNDERSTANDING AMONG AMERICANS OF ALL RACES, RELIGIOUS AND
CREEDS.

L *We must be inspired to*
~~LET US PROUDLY WORK~~ TO ACHIEVE FREEDOM FOR ALL AMERICANS
SO THAT OUR NATION CAN PROCLAIM TO THE WORLD THAT WE ARE

"ONE NATION, UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE" *— With liberty +*
Justice for all "
#####



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