

REMARKS BY MRS. FRANCES HOWARD
ON BEHALF OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
ACCEPTING THE HENRY W. EDGERTON CIVIL LIBERTIES AWARD
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FUND
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA
ANNUAL DINNER

Washington, D. C.

November 7, 1977

Ambassador Young, President Vanderstar, distinguished members and friends of the American Civil Liberties Union Fund of the National Capital Area:

It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I accept the Henry W. Edgerton Civil Liberties Award on behalf of my brother, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey. I know he feels privileged to share this award with Wiley Branton, an attorney who is held in high regard in the District of Columbia, and with Pearl Hoffman, who has done an outstanding job as litigation coordinator for this organization.

Hubert asked me to express his sincere regret at not being able to be with you this evening. He feels a genuine kinship, as you all know well, with Americans dedicated to strengthening our understanding of and commitment to the basic rights and liberties that are the genius and driving force of our democracy. And I know how much he misses this opportunity to pass further instructions on to our distinguished Ambassador to the United Nations.

My brother feels greatly honored to follow in the footsteps of Julius Hobson, Ernie Fitzgerald, and Senator Charles Mathias as a recipient of the Edgerton Award. Judge Edgerton's civil liberties opinions are perhaps best known through the volume edited by Eleanor Bontecou, and entitled, Freedom in the Balance. But it is Hubert's belief that this honored jurist undoubtedly cut his eye teeth in this field during his initial law firm apprenticeship in St. Paul, Minnesota. So he is especially pleased to associate himself with a fellow son of the North Star State in advancing the great work of civil rights and civil liberties.

My brother has prepared a brief message which I would like to share with you now:

"I deeply appreciate the honor which has been bestowed upon me by the American Civil Liberties Union Fund of the National Capital Area. I do feel at home with this organization, for, in a real sense, we have worked together for the cause of civil rights, human rights -- human justice.

"We can take genuine pride in the dramatic and solid progress that has been made in our nation in only the past two decades in defining and guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of American citizens.

"But we all know that freedom's work is never done; that we must remain ever vigilant to hold the gains we have achieved; that further barriers to the affirmation of human dignity remain to be overcome; and that our cause must now be identified with the worldwide movement toward guaranteeing fundamental human rights of all peoples.

"Vigorous protection of the constitutional rights of freedom of speech and the press, of peaceable assembly, of the free exercise of religion, and of privacy is central to the survival of a free society. No one is truly free unless all are free. When the rights of an individual are abrogated in the interests of society, however temporary this expediency may be, then that society has abrogated its responsibility to itself and its future. And where some are treated 'more equal' than others, our commitment to the equal protection of the laws becomes a hollow promise.

"We know that historic and vital new laws prohibiting racial discrimination are without meaning and force where rights associated with economic justice are denied. When black joblessness in America is twice as high as the national level of unemployment, and when at least two out of every five black teenagers in our central cities cannot find work, then we are faced with the portent of profound social alienation, if not disruption.

"And we have before us in this decade a vitally important agenda to establish an equality of rights among men and women in America. The right of women to equality of opportunity and treatment has been too long denied, to the detriment of achieving a truly open and just and healthy society. There must be an on-going education effort if we are to erase a double standard and mold a decent respect for all persons solely on the basis of their abilities and contributions and self-worth.

"Finally, we know that we cannot seek democracy and social and economic justice at home and abandon these principles abroad. A sense of moral values should be an imperative of our foreign policy. As a signatory, with thirty-four other nations, of the Helsinki Agreement, we have an historic opportunity to pursue an intensive effort to assure the fulfilment by these nations of their obligations under the human rights provisions of this Agreement. The time has come -- as the present Administration is demonstrating with effectiveness -- for the United States to exercise leadership in the promotion of human rights -- economic as well as political -- worldwide, and in the global assault on the historic plagues of mankind -- the bondage of hunger, disease, and illiteracy.

"Our challenge is to recapture for America the greatness that is based on decent and righteous actions. We have overcome many obstacles together, but a long journey still remains before us.

"There is every reason to believe that the progressive forces in America and abroad can make great gains in the struggle to eradicate injustice, discrimination, and deprivation wherever they are found.

"I know that the men and women of will and vision here this evening are ready to join hands for the kind of America and world which is in our hopes and dreams. And it is in this spirit that I accept this award with deep gratitude."

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AMBASSADOR YOUNG, PRESIDENT VANDERSTAR, DISTINGUISHED
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FUND
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA:

IT IS WITH A DEEP SENSE OF GRATITUDE THAT I ACCEPT THE
HENRY W. EDGERTON CIVIL LIBERTIES AWARD ON BEHALF OF MY
BROTHER, SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY. I KNOW HE FEELS PRIVILEGED
TO SHARE THIS AWARD WITH WILEY BRANTON, AN ATTORNEY WHO IS HELD
IN HIGH REGARD IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, AND WITH PEARL
HOFFMAN, WHO HAS DONE AN OUTSTANDING JOB AS LITIGATION COORDINATOR
FOR THIS ORGANIZATION.

HUBERT ASKED ME TO EXPRESS HIS SINCERE REGRET AT NOT BEING
ABLE TO BE WITH YOU THIS EVENING. HE FEELS A GENUINE KINSHIP,

AS YOU ALL KNOW WELL, WITH AMERICANS DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING
OUR UNDERSTANDING OF AND COMMITMENT TO THE BASIC RIGHTS AND
LIBERTIES THAT ARE THE GENIUS AND DRIVING FORCE OF OUR DEMOCRACY.
AND I KNOW HOW MUCH HE MISSES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PASS FURTHER
INSTRUCTIONS ON TO OUR DISTINGUISHED AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS

MY BROTHER FEELS GREATLY HONORED TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS
OF JULIUS HOBSON, ERNIE FITZGERALD, AND SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS
AS A RECIPIENT OF THE EDGERTON AWARD. JUDGE EDGERTON'S CIVIL
LIBERTIES OPINIONS ARE PERHAPS BEST KNOWN THROUGH THE VOLUME
EDITED BY ELEANOR BONTECOU, AND ENTITLED, FREEDOM IN THE BALANCE.
BUT IT IS HUBERT'S BELIEF THAT THIS HONORED JURIST UNDOUBTEDLY
CUT HIS EYE TEETH IN THIS FIELD DURING HIS INITIAL LAW FIRM
APPRENTICESHIP IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA.

SO HE IS ESPECIALLY PLEASED TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH A FELLOW
SON OF THE NORTH STAR STATE IN ADVANCING THE GREAT WORK OF CIVIL
RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES.

MY BROTHER HAS PREPARED A BRIEF MESSAGE WHICH I WOULD LIKE
TO SHARE WITH YOU NOW:

"I DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE HONOR WHICH HAS BEEN BESTOWED
UPON ME BY THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FUND OF THE
NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA. I DO FEEL AT HOME WITH THIS ORGANIZATION,
FOR, IN A REAL SENSE, WE HAVE WORKED TOGETHER FOR THE CAUSE
OF CIVIL RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS -- HUMAN JUSTICE.

"WE CAN TAKE GENUINE PRIDE IN THE DRAMATIC AND SOLID PROGRESS
THAT HAS BEEN MADE IN OUR NATION IN ONLY THE PAST TWO DECADES IN
DEFINING AND GUARANTEEING THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF AMERICAN
CITIZENS.

"BUT WE ALL KNOW THAT FREEDOM'S WORK IS NEVER DONE; THAT WE MUST REMAIN EVER VIGILANT TO HOLD THE GAINS WE HAVE ACHIEVED; THAT FURTHER BARRIERS TO THE AFFIRMATION OF HUMAN DIGNITY REMAIN TO BE OVERCOME; AND THAT OUR CAUSE MUST NOW BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT TOWARD GUARANTEEING FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLES.

"VIGOROUS PROTECTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE PRESS, OF PEACEABLE ASSEMBLY, OF THE FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION, AND OF PRIVACY IS CENTRAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF A FREE SOCIETY. NO ONE IS TRULY FREE UNLESS ALL ARE FREE. WHEN THE RIGHTS OF AN INDIVIDUAL ARE ABROGATED IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIETY, HOWEVER TEMPORARY THIS EXPEDIENCY MAY BE, THEN THAT SOCIETY HAS ABROGATED ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO ITSELF AND ITS FUTURE.

AND WHERE SOME ARE TREATED 'MORE EQUAL' THAN OTHERS, OUR COMMITMENT TO THE EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAWS BECOMES A HOLLOW PROMISE.

"WE KNOW THAT HISTORIC AND VITAL NEW LAWS PROHIBITING RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ARE WITHOUT MEANING AND FORCE WHERE RIGHTS ASSOCIATED WITH ECONOMIC JUSTICE ARE DENIED. WHEN BLACK JOBLESSNESS IN AMERICA IS TWICE AS HIGH AS THE NATIONAL LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYMENT, AND WHEN AT LEAST TWO OUT OF EVERY FIVE BLACK TEENAGERS IN OUR CENTRAL CITIES CANNOT FIND WORK, THEN WE ARE FACED WITH THE PORTENT OF PROFOUND SOCIAL ALIENATION, IF NOT DISRUPTION.

"AND WE HAVE BEFORE US IN THIS DECADE A VITALLY IMPORTANT AGENDA TO ESTABLISH AN EQUALITY OF RIGHTS AMONG MEN AND WOMEN IN AMERICA.

THE RIGHT OF WOMEN TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND TREATMENT HAS BEEN TOO LONG DENIED, TO THE DETRIMENT OF ACHIEVING A TRULY OPEN AND JUST AND HEALTHY SOCIETY. THERE MUST BE AN ON-GOING EDUCATION EFFORT IF WE ARE TO ERASE A DOUBLE STANDARD AND MOLD A DECENT RESPECT FOR ALL PERSONS SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF THEIR ABILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS AND SELF-WORTH.

"FINALLY, WE KNOW THAT WE CANNOT SEEK DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE AT HOME AND ABANDON THESE PRINCIPLES ABROAD. A SENSE OF MORAL VALUES SHOULD BE AN IMPERATIVE OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY. AS A SIGNATORY, WITH THIRTY-FOUR OTHER NATIONS, OF THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT, WE HAVE AN HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY TO PURSUE AN INTENSIVE EFFORT TO ASSURE THE FULFILMENT BY THESE NATIONS OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROVISIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT.

THE TIME HAS COME -- AS THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IS
DEMONSTRATING WITH EFFECTIVENESS -- FOR THE UNITED STATES TO
EXERCISE LEADERSHIP IN THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS -- ECONOMIC
AS WELL AS POLITICAL -- WORLDWIDE, AND IN THE GLOBAL ASSAULT ON
THE HISTORIC PLAGUES OF MANKIND -- THE BONDAGE OF HUNGER, DISEASE,
AND ILLITERACY.

"OUR CHALLENGE IS TO RECAPTURE FOR AMERICA THE GREATNESS
THAT IS BASED ON DECENT AND RIGHTEOUS ACTIONS. WE HAVE OVER-
COME MANY OBSTACLES TOGETHER, BUT A LONG JOURNEY STILL REMAINS
BEFORE US.

"THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE PROGRESSIVE
FORCES IN AMERICA AND ABROAD CAN MAKE GREAT GAINS IN THE
STRUGGLE TO ERADICATE INJUSTICE, DISCRIMINATION, AND
DEPRIVATION WHEREVER THEY ARE FOUND.

"I KNOW THAT THE MEN AND WOMEN OF WILL AND VISION HERE THIS
EVENING ARE READY TO JOIN HANDS FOR THE KIND OF AMERICA AND
WORLD WHICH IS IN OUR HOPES AND DREAMS. AND IT IS IN THIS
SPIRIT THAT I ACCEPT THIS AWARD WITH DEEP GRATITUDE."

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