

presenting

SENATOR HUBERT HUMPHREY (Dem. - Minn.)

in an off-the-cuff interview

"Civil Rights - North and South"

Broadcast in the Washington Area from W P I K

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(after introduction)

Charles parmer

...let it be remembered, Virginia did NOT go Dixiecrat - it went Truman Democrat. Less than one-tenth of its vote was cast in the Dixiecrat column. Senator Humphrey, how would you interpret that vote?

SENATOR HUBERT HUMPHREY

Well, Mr. Parmer, I would certainly interpret that wonderful vote of Virginia as a living and modern testimonial to the great democracy of the State. ^{of Va} After all, any man that has studied American history, fully realizes that Virginia is literally the cradle of our ~~democratic~~ democratic way of life; and that it is the great home of the presidents of this country, and those who love America cannot help but have an undying love in their heart for Virginia and for all it has meant to the people of this great democracy.

Parmer

Beginning Monday, Senator, the Rules Committee in the Senate will stage hearings ^{the question} on whether to change the Rules so that filibusters may not hold up legislation in the future. Do you think those Rules should be changed in that regard?

Humphrey

for Senator Humphrey's
files

Humphrey

Well, of course I think the Rules should be changed. I might say that I didn't arrive at that decision hastily. As a matter of fact, I took a good deal of time to think it out; and to talk with a host of people who are vitally interested in the legislative program of this, the 81st Congress; and the program of our President.

I just wish to go back, Mr. Parmer, to that first question you asked me....I think one of the reasons that Virginia went Truman Democrat~~as~~, as you called it, or just Democrat~~as~~, is that the people of Virginia, like the people of the rest of America, are vitally interested in great national programs that lift up the well-being of our people - and Mr. Truman, more than any other man in modern times, campaigned on specific issues: he campaigned on the great vital issues of our time, that pertain~~ed~~ to our domestic economy, our foreign policy. He didn't mamby-pamby about it. He talked straight from the shoulder, for which he is so well known. I think that was the deciding factor in that^{le} great election, in the great victory that came to Mr. Truman and the Democratic Party. The people didn't vote ^{on} personalities this time. Of course they took people to their hearts, but I think there was a great deal of sober thought and reflection. They looked at the issues, and they said, 'this is what we want.' And I say that the Congress, this 81st Congress, had better deliver on these issues, because if it doesn't, I wouldn't want, as a good loyal Democrat, to predict what will be the complexion of the 82nd Congress. It might not be so Democratic. In other words, we have some obligations.

Parmer

Do you think the civil rights ^{platform} program - and you really are an

authority on it - do you think it will be adopted early in the session; and do you see any probability that such will not be adopted?

Humphrey

I thought a good deal about what we call legislative strategy, and I can assure you that I have not been invited into the inner councils of the strategy board - I'm a freshman; ^{Senator} and I realize that one has more or less to be seasoned in this business, ^{the rule of seniority does apply} and fully realize the necessity for it...you ask me about, did I think that the civil rights program will be adopted early in the session:-

No, I do not. I will tell you why. If we are sincere - and I have no reason to deny it - ~~if~~ ^{that} we are going to try and get as much legislation through this congress on the basis of the Democratic platform, that we can hold our ranks together on - in other words, there's a great unanimity of feeling about the necessity ~~of~~ for raising minimum wages. I think there is a real feeling that we must do something about this tremendous housing shortage; and that we are going to pass broad and comprehensive housing legislation: that is, if we hold our ranks together.

I think there has been a lesson, that has come up from the people - a sort of referendum, a sort of a public hearing on labor legislation: I think we are going to act on that. The American people are looking forward to the broadening and the coverage of Social Security - the increasing of its benefits. They are interested in Federal aid to education. The school system of this country is in a ^{perilous} terrible condition. We've got to do something about that. They are interested in national defense; in making

the United Nations' work, and in our foreign policy. Now that does not mean that we are putting off civil rights until the tail-end. Don't misunderstand me. I won't back up for anybody on my convictions on this issue. It simply means all this is a part of civil rights.

You see,
Civil rights means more than just passing a law for fair employment. It means more than just an anti-lynch law, or anti-poll tax. ~~Those~~ ^{These} are legal symbols of what we mean by civil rights. But I think that civil rights include the opportunity for a good education for everybody in this country - for every boy and girl in America. It includes also the elimination of illiteracy among adults in America.

Civil rights includes healthy bodies and healthy minds. It includes some security ⁱⁿ ~~for~~ our old age. Old ~~age~~ ^{people} can't live on \$25 and \$30 a month. Not any that I have met - and that we surely have to do something about.

You see,
I want to say to my civil rights friends - and sometimes we become a bit sectional on these things - that all of this legislation is part of a great democratic program - with a small d - for the American people.

I do feel, of course, that the things I mention, such as anti-poll tax legislation, anti-lynching ^{which} do not apply entirely to the South. ~~(You know, I wish that my Southern friends would understand it.)~~ All of America is with a bit of sin on this. There is no single area in the country that is guiltless. There is not one area that is totally guilty. >

My goodness! In Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, we have had all kind ^s of discrimination, and believe me, we are just as guilty in some areas as other people are; so let's not get defensive; *about*

let's realize that the pattern of conduct in America is rather universal, and that law can be universal in its application. *(So* when I talk about the right of people to vote, I mean any place in America. When I say the right of personal security - which is another way of saying anti-lynching - why, we have had mob-riots in the Northern cities, and many times there has not been prosecution; there has not been a follow-through to find the guilty party.

(We have had all kinds of demonstrations that are not within the American tradition and the American way of life; so you see ~~that~~ ^{civil} ~~kind of~~ ^{Disse} legislation applies all over this country - not just to one area. ~~Now~~ ^{would be} you ask if such legislation will be called up early. I would say it ~~will be brought up on the Calendar.~~ ^{will be} We should hold our hearings. Get it on the Calendar, then at the appropriate time we ~~would~~ ^{will} go to work on it.

Farmer

down Senator, I'm awfully glad we have you on the radio today. You have presented a facet of this matter which we have not understood in the South. It certainly has clarified matters, and I think you've made a tremendous number of friends.

Humphrey

I want to go down ^{to} the South and talk about this as a friend. You see, I have spent a little over a year in Louisiana. I know something about the South. Some of my folks come from the South. *laugh* I think I have some idea of the problems that are there - and there are no easy answers to this thing. And I think they will find a friend in Hubert Humphrey, rather than one that they consider to be an enemy. And I think there are enough good people who want to

do the right thing. /if we can just find the means of doing it; so that we will pass civil rights legislation ^{and it} ~~that~~ will work to the benefit and not to the detriment of a single person in this country.

Parmer

...just let me make an off-side remark here, ladies and gentlemen. Do you know that one of Senator Humphrey's closest friends in the United States Senate is Senator Russell Long of Louisiana?

Humphrey

That's right! I think the world of Russell. We went to school together. Now we live out in the same neighborhood. I suppose Russell and I will disagree at times. I sometimes disagree with my wife - and I deeply love her. So I'm not worried about mild disagreements.

Parmer

Senator, what do you think ^{really} is the ^{today} biggest piece of legislation that ~~will come up~~ before the Congress - affecting all the people?

Humphrey

That's a tough one, Mr. Parmer. I didn't expect you to come up with that question. I really just don't know the right answer. Of course I am so vitally concerned with our own national security - the world in which we live. I think the formation of a foreign policy - that ^{is} is going to find the answers to some of these almost impossible road-blocks that we have at the present, ~~we~~ would of ~~course~~ ^{have} course be the greatest bit of statesmanship that we could have. I don't know ^{how} we are going to find that answer. We have got a tough situation. We are facing Communist aggression; we are facing real difficult problems in Europe and Asia. But as Americans

I don't think we are going to back away from ~~them~~^{it}. I think we ought to look for the solution, and to remember that we are going to have to sacrifice in this problem of gaining the peace^{for}. If we have world war III, Mr. Farmer, we are going to sacrifice. Many a family made a lot of sacrifices - my family did in World War II. And I'm here to tell that I'm perfectly willing to make equal sacrifice^{for} for the cause of world peace. Even if it means doctoring up our sovereignty a little bit; even if it means making some concessions - not concessions on principle - not me - I know what totalitarianism means, and I want no concession on that. But concessionⁱⁿ in terms of some of this symbolism that we have had. Try to think up some areas of agreement - and to work toward ~~building~~ building a great friendly group^{of} of neighbors about us, so that we are secureⁱⁿ in our human rights.

Farmer

How can we best go about building a great circle of neighbors?

Humphrey

Well, I think we haven't even touched the facilities of the U N. I think we've had a little ^{bit} too much of American unilateral action. Now that does not mean that there has not been good cause for it. It has been tough to get along with Mr. Gromyko, or Mr. Vishynsky or the Soviet union. I don't think we have found ^{very} many ways to get along with them. But that ought not to be the block in our way. We ought to remember that there are many more people in this world that are desirous of freedom than there are ^{desirous} of slavery; and that means that we have got to appeal to these people. And that means that when a little republic like Indonesia, for example, wants to live, lets let them live, lets help them live. It means that when

there are great problems in the Palestine area - let's help those people live as ~~more~~^{free} independent people. Let's not worry too much about the economics involved in this. That does not generally get back to the rank and file of our people anyhow. Let's worry about how we can find means of controlling atomic energy. Let's worry about building, if you please, a ^world organization that, even if it has to be one that does not include some of the people of the U N, so that we do build the kind of society that can be secure with strength, with power, and also with economic power; that is, economic productivity. You cannot talk ~~this~~ out in two or three minutes, Mr. Parmer. I have talked about it for a long time; I have taught it for four or five years, and I still do not know the answers; but I am ~~still~~ looking, and I am still going to continue to look with an open mind.

Parmer

That certainly is an honest and informative answer. Now do you think that ~~President~~^{President} Harry Truman is going to make steps toward peace, genuine steps?

Humphrey

I don't know of any man in our time that has a deeper passion for world peace than Harry S. Truman, President of the United States. I am ~~perfectly~~^{personally} convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that that is his great desire as President of this great nation. I think he'd do anything that was ^{with} in the realm of honor, decency, and democratic principles to obtain the peace and to secure the peace. He knows that would be the monument to his greatness and to his character. Lik wise let me say I think Harry Truman is a sincere man, and I think he is going to carry through on this

great program he has outlined ^{before} to the Congress. He is going to find help from the junior senator from Minnesota - I don't know how many other people are going to help him; I hope a great majority. But I'm going to do my best - if its only one vote, for I believe in his sincerity.

I believe ^{that} this election was a testimonial to the desire of the American people for sincerity in public office, ~~integrity~~ integrity in public office above all things.



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