

AS WE SEE IT  
AFL-CIO Public Service Program

Sunday, April 26, 1964  
American Broadcasting Company

SUBJECT: "This is the Year of Freedom"

PARTICIPANT: Senator Hubert Humphrey at Four Freedoms Dinner

MODERATOR: Harry W. Flannery

Time: 13:20

FLANNERY: AS WE SEE IT.

HUMPHREY: Until the people in the churches and in education and in business and in the fraternal orders, until the people who are the spokesmen of America speak up for decency and for dignity we will fail in our task in the Houses of Congress. Because, above all, the Congress of the United States is a representative body and it cannot, in truth, represent that which is not.

FLANNERY: Senator Hubert Humphrey, leader with Senator Kuchel of California, of the bi-partisan forces for civil rights in the Senate.

Senator Humphrey was speaking at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City accepting the 1964 Four Freedoms Award.

This radio station of the ABC network and the AFL-CIO bring you Senator Humphrey as he declared that the theme of the year is "Freedom."

HUMPHREY: Franklin Roosevelt understood the meaning of that word and he understood how much it meant to people. And Franklin Roosevelt had a way about him that made you feel, every time you listened to his voice, a little bigger, a little better, somewhat greater, more noble and at the same time, more humble. He understood the importance of the word and not just the importance of the tangible materialistic power. That message was of January 6, 1941. Those were bleak days for America; very difficult days, days of uncertainty. The tide of Hitlerism was running strong. Freedom was not on the march it was in full retreat and we had no big army or navy or air force and no atomic bomb. But we had a man who understood that human beings represent power particularly if they are motivated, if they are inspired and this man, Franklin Roosevelt through the word, like his contemporary Winston Churchill was able to create new strength out of human spirit and when he spoke of those Four Freedoms -- Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want and Freedom from Fear -- he touched the lives of everyone within the range of his voice and those who could read or even those who could be told about it.

FLANNERY: The Four Freedoms was a rallying cry back in 1941 and it still is, said Humphrey. Important today is the freedom of dignity.

HUMPHREY: More than people want food, clothing and shelter they want to be respected. More than they hate poverty and disease they hate and they suffer humiliation. It is humiliation that drives them to violence and sometimes to destruction because dignity really involves pride, self pride, pride in one's country, pride in his family, pride in himself and when you crush that pride -- whatever way it may be crushed -- you destroy the man. You destroy his soul, you destroy his spirit.

What is the real problem in America? I've heard many people say, for example, of the problem that we now face in civil rights, the race problem as they put it. I call it just a citizenship problem. What is it? It isn't that there isn't money. It isn't that there aren't people that are willing to help. But it is essentially that over a long period of time a group in our population have not been truly accepted and respected. They have suffered humiliation and as a result they feel themselves the victim of many indignities.

Now, there are others besides those of color who suffer this indignity. Millions of our elderly citizens are suffering the indignity of being cast on the rubbish heap at an age of 65 or 70, no medical care, inadequate income and more than that, loneliness. Thousands of our handicapped are not being called upon to utilize

their God-given talents, because it takes too much time to bring them along. And millions and millions of our citizens are under-educated or not educated at all. And as a result in this day and age, they are suffered to do menial tasks even though their minds and their hands, if properly trained, could do great things. In other words, millions of our fellow citizens are scarred and they are wounded and the scar and the wound is deeper than that that could come by a burning sword. One who has not experienced this humiliation can't understand it, I am sure. But let the doubters recall the words of that immortal Englishman Shakespeare, when he said, "He jests at scars who never felt a wound." And I am of the opinion that the elderly, the handicapped and the uneducated in America have been wounded and they have been scared.

Now, some of us know that no single group has been more scarred than our fellow citizens, the American Negro. Twenty or more million of them. Some people are shocked when they see demonstrations without asking why. And some people -- and some of us were shocked when our fellow Negro citizens demonstrating for their rights were the victims of police brutality, electric cattle prodders, fire hoses and police dogs. It was shocking for us but I am of the opinion that it didn't hurt nearly as much as the hidden humiliation which millions and millions of these same people have suffered that was invisible. So, I ask what is the meaning of the Four Freedoms to a boy or a family -- let's put it this way -- if you are told, for example, at age 3, "black child, stay in your place." And what place? The bottom of the ladder, the last place. The lowest, the shoddiest, the back of the bus, the tenement. That's your place. Now, never mind if the child that we speak of has the potential of a George Washington Carver or a Ralph Bunche, a William Hastey or a Robert Weaver or a Marion Anderson or a Carl Rowan or a General Benjamin Davis or a Martin Luther King. And why ask this audience tonight, a fine, liberal minded people motivated by a sense of social justice, how long do you think better than 20 million fellow Americans are supposed to take all of this?

This is what it is all about. Is it any wonder that there is a Negro revolution, as some call it, under way in this country? The wonder is that it is so late and that it is so self contained and self disciplined and so responsible.

FLANNERY: Senator Humphrey asked what we thought about the Negroes.

HUMPHREY: Do we think that their children can grow up reading the history books and the inspirational messages of a Thomas Jefferson, a Samuel Adams, a James Otis, a Franklin Delano Roosevelt an Abraham Lincoln, a John Kennedy or a Lyndon Johnson and be content to act like second class citizens and serfs? You can't have it both ways, my fellow Americans. Do you think that parents will swallow their pride another 5 or 10 years while their children continue to be denied equal educational opportunities, equal economic and social opportunities and to suffer the indignities of prejudice and discrimination? I don't. The trouble is, too many of us are too content. Do you really think that Negro teenagers and adults will be content to be told once again, "never mind if you are the last to be hired and the first to be fired." And it all too often happens, you know.

No, I'll tell you, my fellow Americans, the Negro citizen today demands freedom. And that is what the March on Washington was all about. And, my dear friends, this is what I am afraid some people in Congress don't understand. And you have got to help them understand it. I heard my fellow Senators speak out against the film on the March on Washington saying that it talked too much about freedom as if people didn't have it. Well, when you are in the comfortable surroundings of the United States Senate, I guess you can feel that almost everybody has freedom. But when you visit the places where all too often political leaders don't visit, freedom is a theory, a promise and not a reality. The sound of marching feet, these freedom marches, echoes mightily today, and we are going to be hearing it in the United States Senate,

because freedom is the business of this country and freedom is the business of the United States Senate. One hundred years of unfinished business has piled up on the desk of every Senator. Is it any wonder that we face the most historic hour of our national history? We have postponed the great decision far too long. But I am of the opinion that this, the second session of the 88th Congress, can go down in history as the Freedom Congress and that 1964 can, and I think it will be, the freedom year.

We have heard those immortal words, "The tide which taken at the flood leads on to fortune." Omitted, all of the journey of life is in the shallows and miseries. We are at that point as to whether we are going to be in the shallows and the miseries of our failure or whether we are going to be in the fullness of life. I am of the opinion that the tide for civil rights is here and it is at its peak. We have been trying to begin for a long, long time and our late and beloved President Kennedy reminded us that it was the task of this generation to begin and this President has told us that it is our responsibility to continue.

FLANNERY: Senator Hubert Humphrey, co-leader of the bi-partisan forces for civil rights in the United States Senate, as he responded to his being given the Four Freedoms Award of 1964.

This is Harry W. Flannery, your reporter, who invites you to be with us next week at this same time when AS WE SEE IT again comes as a presentation of the AFL-CIO and ABC public affairs.

This program has been brought to you by the ABC network and the affiliated stations to which you are listening.

NAT RADIO: FLANNERY  
BJ/SS

COPY

April 30, 1964

Mr. Harry W. Flannery  
Radio Coordinator  
AFL-CIO  
815 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington 6, D.C.

Dear Harry:

I am honored that you used my Four Freedoms speech on your public service series on the ABC network. And many thanks for your kind words. I hope the talk will be of some help in the struggle for civil rights.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Hubert H. Humphrey

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815 SIXTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON 6, D. C. NATIONAL 8-3870

April 22, 1964

The Honorable Hubert Humphrey  
The Senate Office Building  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Senator:

You will be interested in knowing that we extrapolated from your Four Freedoms speech in New York the attached script for our public service series on the ABC network -- AS WE SEE IT.

As usual, it was an extraordinarily good talk and we were glad to have the opportunity to use it because of its relevance in the current civil rights fight.

Best to you.

Sincerely yours,

Harry W. Flannery  
Radio Coordinator

HWF:Mb  
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Enclosure



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