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NOTES OF VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
CITIZENS FOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
JULY 23, 1968

Tonight I want to talk about the times we live in.

I want to talk about the challenge that will face our nation on January 20, 1969 -- and in the years thereafter.

That day the next President of the United States will find himself facing a new period in history -- a period in which all the old premises. . .the old policies . . .all the old ways of doing things are in question.

He will face not only a new world map -- but a world containing dozens of countries and millions of people who have, until now, almost literally lived outside history.

He will face what modern communication and technology have wrought -- namely, a highly sensitized, "in touch" and impatient family of people and nations who will no longer accept the status quo when it means hunger . . .injustice . . .lack of participation . . .subjugation of one man by another.

No continent or country will be immune from this rising tide. We see it now. And we see it right here in America.

It isn't just in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that there is a revolution of rising expectations. It is happening here, too.

Will we be able to cope with it?

I think we will be able to -- if we face clearly up to the nature of what lies ahead.

The next President of the United States will confront nothing less than the need to re-examine -- and to change, where necessary -- our national priorities, . . . the allocation of our resources . . . even the structures and framework in which we conduct the business of this country.

If America has stood for anything in its history, it has stood for the future.

Now it surely must.

For all the doctrinaire arguments about yesterdays -- or even rightful pride in recent accomplishments -- will mean very little against the challenge of the next decade or the year 2000.

* * *

What is on our national agenda?

First of all, we must come face to face with ourselves -- with our shortcomings, but also with our assets.

From this self-confrontation, I believe we can develop a new social morality -- a morality that will no longer tolerate racial discrimination in democracy . . . hunger in the midst of plenty . . . or joblessness and under-employment in a prosperous society.

We see the beginnings of that new morality now. We see it in the progress that has been made -- and accepted -- by the people over these past seven years.

We see it in the concern that now fills this country over injustice and inequality that were taken for granted all too long.

How can we serve this new morality? I believe we can do so by dedicating ourselves -- and acting on that dedication -- to the overwhelming needs of the future.

I see those needs, first and foremost, as the relaxation of tensions . . . reconciliation . . . and peaceful development. That goes for the world, it goes for our own country.

If there is any single thing happening in the world today, it is the demand of ordinary people that their leaders put first things first.

And that means the placing of national priorities and resources against the problems that keep ordinary people from living a freer, more rewarding existence.

So-called civilized society has been around for a long time now.

But it will never be truly civilized until nations, and people, stop building fences . . . stop stocking weapons . . . stop settling their disputes by force.

We have to get down to the hard work -- right now with the Soviet Union, and in the future, with Communist China -- of reducing the tensions that increasingly take our resources for the wrong things.

I have talked to Prime Minister Kosygin about this. Given a change in the international atmosphere, I would hope to do the same with some future Chinese leader. I have talked about this, too, with the leaders of our Western allies. We have to get on with it.

And we have to do the same thing right here in America -- I mean getting down to the things that really count.

I reject the idea that we have to be two nations, black and white . . . or two nations, north and south . . . or two nations, rich and poor.

No responsible person wants that.

There is a vast group of Americans -- a majority of many millions -- that wants to make this country work . . . that wants safety and equal rights for everyone . . . that bears no ill will against other Americans.

I think this Silent America -- an America still unaroused -- can be aroused.

Those are the overwhelming priorities of today -- and certainly of January 1969: To pull this country together, and then to see if we can't pull the world a little closer to sanity and peace.

* * *

Now there are specifics in this: I think we know what they are.

In the world at large we have to slow down the arms race.

We have to get to the table as soon as possible with the Soviet Union to talk about mutual reduction of both offensive and defensive weapons.

With our allies, we need to talk to the Soviet Union and her allies about a mutual thin-out of troops in Central Europe.

We need to actively build bridges to Communist China -- to do our best to break the Chinese people out of their unhealthy isolation.

Once Vietnam is over -- and if we have the courage to see these discussions in Paris through, I think it can be over -- the nations of Southeast Asia can get down to the work of peaceful development, without regard to ideology. I think we should help.

We must set as a high priority the closing of the gap between rich and poor nations -- a gap that is growing larger every day, and one that I believe is far more a threat to our ultimate security than any other, with the possible exception of the arms race itself.

We can get on, too, with the work of building better peace-keeping machinery in the United Nations and in regional organizations so that the United States will not find itself standing alone as world policeman. We do not have that role now. But it is a danger, unless international machinery can be built to help prevent it.

Here at home, we can get on with the business that every one of us wants to see done.

If we can generate the public support for it, we can use the resources being used in Vietnam and put them to work for human life in America.

First of all, we can bring both security and opportunity to the people of this country -- not one without the other, but both.

I submit that the recommendations of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders are right, and that they should be carried out.

There is no reason in America -- with unequaled wealth and agricultural productivity -- for anyone to go hungry. It is immoral to allow some children to suffer from malnutrition while others in America are concerned about the dangers of overeating.

We must look to the full meaning of civil rights.

We must recognize the civil right of every American to earn a living -- to work and earn.

I don't believe that anyone wants a welfare check or a hand-out.

I believe people want the dignity and the self-respect that comes from an honest job.

I believe it is our responsibility to help everyone who wants a job to have that job. I think the private sector can come up with the jobs. I also believe the government must do whatever is necessary to back that effort up with financing or subsidy.

We must provide the civil right to a full education for every American -- from age four through college -- and the civil right to grow up in a decent home and neighborhood.

We must, once and for all, devote ourselves to the reinvigoration and renewal of our urban environment through a new Marshall Plan for the American city.

* * * * *

Those are big goals.

They will require big commitments -- commitments in money; commitments in determination by federal, state and local government...by the free institutions of this country...by every single person.

I am betting my personal future that the American people are ready, and willing, to do this.

And I am betting my future that they will reject the opposition party's appeal -- and it is already beginning -- to nostalgia...to escapism...to wishfulness and inaction.

Eight years from now this country will celebrate its 200th birthday.

By then, this nation can be torn...divided...withdrawing within itself and from the outside world.

Or it can be open.

It can be safe.

It can be free.

It can be filled with opportunity -- for every single citizen.

I think we can do that. I think we can build that kind of country.

We can do it if those of us who believe in political action will dedicate ourselves to it.

This nation has the resources.

This nation has the money.

This nation has the strength.

This nation has the power to do whatever it needs to do. The only question is the question of our will. I mean to summon that will. I ask your help.

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NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

CITIZENS FOR HUMPHREY

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

JULY 23, 1968

TONIGHT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE TIMES WE
LIVE IN.

I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE CHALLENGE THAT
WILL FACE OUR NATION ON JANUARY 20, 1969 -- AND
IN THE YEARS THEREAFTER.

THAT DAY THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WILL FIND HIMSELF FACING A NEW PERIOD IN HISTORY -- A PERIOD IN WHICH ALL THE OLD PREMISES... THE OLD POLICIES...ALL THE OLD WAYS OF DOING THINGS ARE IN QUESTION.

HE WILL FACE NOT ONLY A NEW WORLD MAP -- BUT A WORLD CONTAINING DOZENS OF COUNTRIES AND MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE, UNTIL NOW, ALMOST LITERALLY LIVED OUTSIDE HISTORY.

HE WILL FACE WHAT MODERN COMMUNICATION
AND TECHNOLOGY HAVE WROUGHT -- NAMELY, A
HIGHLY SENSITIZED, "IN TOUCH" AND IMPATIENT
FAMILY OF PEOPLE AND NATIONS WHO WILL NO
LONGER ACCEPT THE STATUS QUO WHEN IT MEANS
HUNGER...INJUSTICE...LACK OF PARTICIPATION...
SUBJUGATION OF ONE MAN BY ANOTHER.

NO CONTINENT OR COUNTRY WILL BE IMMUNE
FROM THIS RISING TIDE. WE SEE IT NOW. AND WE
SEE IT RIGHT HERE IN AMERICA.

IT ISN'T JUST IN AFRICA, ASIA, AND LATIN
AMERICA THAT THERE IS A REVOLUTION OF RISING
EXPECTATIONS. IT IS HAPPENING HERE, TOO.

WILL WE BE ABLE TO COPE WITH IT?

I THINK WE WILL BE ABLE TO -- IF WE FACE
CLEARLY UP TO THE NATURE OF WHAT LIES AHEAD.

THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
WILL CONFRONT NOTHING LESS THAN THE NEED TO
RE-EXAMINE -- AND TO CHANGE, WHERE NECESSARY --
OUR NATIONAL PRIORITIES... THE ALLOCATION OF OUR
RESOURCES... EVEN THE STRUCTURES AND FRAMEWORK
IN WHICH WE CONDUCT THE BUSINESS OF THIS COUNTRY.

IF AMERICA HAS STOOD FOR ANYTHING IN ITS
HISTORY, IT HAS STOOD FOR THE FUTURE.

NOW IT SURELY MUST.

FOR ALL THE DOCTRINAIRE ARGUMENTS ABOUT
YESTERDAYS -- OR EVEN RIGHTFUL PRIDE IN RECENT
ACCOMPLISHMENTS -- WILL MEAN VERY LITTLE
AGAINST THE CHALLENGE OF THE NEXT DECADE OR
THE YEAR 2000.

* * *

WHAT IS ON OUR NATIONAL AGENDA?

FIRST OF ALL, WE MUST COME FACE TO FACE
WITH OURSELVES -- WITH OUR SHORTCOMINGS, BUT
ALSO WITH OUR ASSETS.

FROM THIS SELF-CONFRONTATION, I BELIEVE
WE CAN DEVELOP A NEW SOCIAL MORALITY -- A
MORALITY THAT WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION IN DEMOCRACY... HUNGER IN THE
MIDST OF PLENTY... OR JOBLESSNESS AND UNDER-

EMPLOYMENT IN A PROSPEROUS SOCIETY.

WE SEE THE BEGINNINGS OF THAT NEW MORALITY

~~NEW~~. WE SEE IT IN THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN

MADE, ~~AND ACCERTED~~ BY THE PEOPLE OVER

THESE PAST SEVEN YEARS.

↳ WE SEE IT IN THE CONCERN THAT NOW FILLS
THIS COUNTRY OVER INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY
THAT WERE TAKEN FOR GRANTED ALL TOO LONG.

↳ HOW CAN WE SERVE THIS NEW MORALITY? I
BELIEVE WE CAN DO SO BY DEDICATING OURSELVES --
AND ACTING ON THAT DEDICATION -- TO THE
OVERWHELMING NEEDS OF THE FUTURE.

I SEE THOSE NEEDS, FIRST AND FOREMOST, AS
THE RELAXATION OF TENSIONS... RECONCILIATION...
AND PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT. THAT GOES FOR THE
WORLD, IT GOES FOR OUR OWN COUNTRY.

IF THERE IS ANY SINGLE THING HAPPENING IN
THE WORLD TODAY, IT IS THE DEMAND OF ORDINARY
PEOPLE THAT THEIR LEADERS PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST.

AND THAT MEANS THE PLACING OF NATIONAL
PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES AGAINST THE PROBLEMS
THAT KEEP ORDINARY PEOPLE FROM LIVING A FREER,
MORE REWARDING EXISTENCE.

SO-CALLED CIVILIZED SOCIETY HAS BEEN AROUND
FOR A LONG TIME NOW.

BUT IT WILL NEVER BE TRULY CIVILIZED UNTIL
NATIONS, AND PEOPLE, STOP BUILDING FENCES...
STOP STOCKING WEAPONS... STOP SETTling THEIR
DISPUTES BY FORCE.

WE HAVE TO GET DOWN TO THE HARD WORK --
RIGHT NOW WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND IN THE
FUTURE, WITH COMMUNIST CHINA -- OF REDUCING
THE TENSIONS THAT INCREASINGLY TAKE OUR RESOURCES
FOR THE WRONG THINGS.

I HAVE TALKED TO PRIME MINISTER KOSYGIN
ABOUT THIS. GIVEN A CHANGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL
ATMOSPHERE, I WOULD HOPE TO DO THE SAME WITH
SOME FUTURE CHINESE LEADER. I HAVE TALKED ABOUT
THIS, TOO, WITH THE LEADERS OF OUR WESTERN ALLIES.
WE HAVE TO GET ON WITH IT.

AND WE HAVE TO DO THE SAME THING RIGHT
HERE IN AMERICA -- I MEAN GETTING DOWN TO THE
THINGS THAT REALLY COUNT.

I REJECT THE IDEA THAT WE HAVE TO BE TWO
NATIONS, BLACK AND WHITE...OR TWO NATIONS,
NORTH AND SOUTH...OR TWO NATIONS, RICH AND POOR.

NO RESPONSIBLE PERSON WANTS THAT.

THERE IS A VAST GROUP OF AMERICANS -- A
MAJORITY OF MANY MILLIONS -- THAT WANTS TO MAKE
THIS COUNTRY WORK...THAT WANTS SAFETY AND
EQUAL RIGHTS FOR EVERYONE...THAT BEARS NO ILL
WILL AGAINST OTHER AMERICANS.

I THINK THIS SILENT AMERICA -- AN AMERICA
STILL UNAROUSED -- CAN BE AROUSED.

THOSE ARE THE OVERWHELMING PRIORITIES OF
TODAY -- AND CERTAINLY OF JANUARY 1969: TO PULL
THIS COUNTRY TOGETHER, AND THEN TO SEE IF WE
CAN'T PULL THE WORLD A LITTLE CLOSER TO SANITY
AND PEACE.

* * *

NOW THERE ARE SPECIFICS IN THIS: I THINK WE
KNOW WHAT THEY ARE.

IN THE WORLD AT LARGE WE HAVE TO SLOW DOWN
THE ARMS RACE.

WE HAVE TO GET TO THE TABLE AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE WITH THE SOVIET UNION TO TALK ABOUT
MUTUAL REDUCTION OF BOTH OFFENSIVE AND
DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.

WITH OUR ALLIES, WE NEED TO TALK TO THE
SOVIET UNION AND HER ALLIES ABOUT A MUTUAL
THIN-OUT OF TROOPS IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

WE NEED TO ACTIVELY BUILD BRIDGES TO
COMMUNIST CHINA -- TO DO OUR BEST TO BREAK THE
CHINESE PEOPLE OUT OF THEIR UNHEALTHY ISOLATION.

ONCE VIETNAM IS OVER -- AND IF WE HAVE THE
COURAGE TO SEE THESE DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS THROUGH,
I THINK IT CAN BE OVER -- THE NATIONS OF SOUTHEAST
ASIA CAN GET DOWN TO THE WORK OF PEACEFUL
DEVELOPMENT, WITHOUT REGARD TO IDEOLOGY.

I THINK WE SHOULD HELP.

WE MUST SET AS A HIGH PRIORITY THE CLOSING OF THE GAP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR NATIONS -- A GAP THAT IS GROWING LARGER EVERY DAY, AND ONE THAT I BELIEVE IS FAR MORE A THREAT TO OUR ULTIMATE SECURITY THAN ANY OTHER, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE ARMS RACE ITSELF.

WE CAN GET ON, TOO, WITH THE WORK OF BUILDING BETTER PEACE-KEEPING MACHINERY IN THE UNITED NATIONS AND IN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SO THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT FIND ITSELF STANDING ALONE AS WORLD POLICEMAN. WE DO NOT HAVE THAT ROLE NOW. BUT IT IS A DANGER, UNLESS INTERNATIONAL MACHINERY CAN BE BUILT TO HELP PREVENT IT.

HERE AT HOME, WE CAN GET ON WITH THE
BUSINESS THAT EVERY ONE OF US WANTS TO SEE DONE.

IF WE CAN GENERATE THE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR
IT, WE CAN USE THE RESOURCES BEING USED IN
VIETNAM AND PUT THEM TO WORK FOR HUMAN LIFE
IN AMERICA.

FIRST OF ALL, WE CAN BRING BOTH SECURITY
AND OPPORTUNITY TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY --
NOT ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER, BUT BOTH.

I SUBMIT THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS ARE
RIGHT, AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE CARRIED OUT.

THERE IS NO REASON IN AMERICA -- WITH
UNEQUALED WEALTH AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY --
FOR ANYONE TO GO HUNGRY. IT IS IMMORAL TO ALLOW
SOME CHILDREN TO SUFFER FROM MALNUTRITION WHILE
OTHERS IN AMERICA ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE DANGERS
OF OVEREATING.

WE MUST LOOK TO THE FULL MEANING OF CIVIL
RIGHTS.

WE MUST RECOGNIZE THE CIVIL RIGHT OF EVERY
AMERICAN TO EARN A LIVING -- TO WORK AND EARN.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ANYONE WANTS A WELFARE
CHECK OR A HAND-OUT.

I BELIEVE PEOPLE WANT THE DIGNITY AND THE
SELF-RESPECT THAT COMES FROM AN HONEST JOB.

I BELIEVE IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP EVERYONE WHO WANTS A JOB TO HAVE THAT JOB. I THINK THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN COME UP WITH THE JOBS. I ALSO BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT MUST DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO BACK THAT EFFORT UP WITH FINANCING OR SUBSIDY.

WE MUST PROVIDE THE CIVIL RIGHT TO A FULL EDUCATION FOR EVERY AMERICAN -- FROM AGE FOUR THROUGH COLLEGE -- AND THE CIVIL RIGHT TO GROW UP IN A DECENT HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD.

WE MUST, ONCE AND FOR ALL, DEVOTE OURSELVES TO THE REINVIGORATION AND RENEWAL OF OUR URBAN ENVIRONMENT THROUGH A NEW MARSHALL PLAN FOR THE AMERICAN CITY.

THOSE ARE BIG GOALS.

THEY WILL REQUIRE BIG COMMITMENTS --

COMMITMENTS IN MONEY; COMMITMENTS IN DETERMINATION

BY FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT...BY

THE FREE INSTITUTIONS OF THIS COUNTRY...BY EVERY

SINGLE PERSON.

I AM BETTING MY PERSONAL FUTURE THAT THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE READY, AND WILLING, TO DO

THIS.

AND I AM BETTING MY PERSONAL FUTURE THAT

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE READY, AND WILLING, TO

DO THIS.

AND I AM BETTING MY FUTURE THAT THEY WILL
REJECT THE OPPOSITION PARTY'S APPEAL -- AND IT
IS ALREADY BEGINNING -- TO NOSTALGIA... TO ESCAPISM...
TO WISHFULNESS AND INACTION.

EIGHT YEARS FROM NOW THIS COUNTRY WILL
CELEBRATE ITS 200TH BIRTHDAY.

BY THEN, THIS NATION CAN BE TORN... DIVIDED...
WITHDRAWING WITHIN ITSELF AND FROM THE OUTSIDE
WORLD.

OR IT CAN BE OPEN.

IT CAN BE SAFE.

IT CAN BE FREE.

IT CAN BE FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITY -- FOR
EVERY SINGLE CITIZEN.

I THINK WE CAN DO THAT. I THINK WE CAN BUILD
THAT KIND OF COUNTRY.

WE CAN DO IT IF THOSE OF US WHO BELIEVE IN
POLITICAL ACTION WILL DEDICATE OURSELVES TO IT.

THIS NATION HAS THE RESOURCES.

THIS NATION HAS THE MONEY.

THIS NATION HAS THE STRENGTH.

THIS NATION HAS THE POWER TO DO WHATEVER
IT NEEDS TO DO.

THE ONLY QUESTION IS THE QUESTION OF OUR WILL.

I MEAN TO SUMMON THAT WILL.

I ASK YOUR HELP.

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