

Speech Of
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

San Jacinto Room
Rice Hotel
Houston, Texas

September 10, 1968

Campaign Kick-off



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1 MAYOR LOUIE WELCH: I want to express
2 our regret that the hall isn't as big as the
3 crowd. If you are going to miss anything, you
4 better miss it now because the Vice President is
5 going to speak in a minute.

6 We appreciate the cooperation of
7 the Fire Marshal's Office in opening up to let
8 another hundred in the very rear.

9 We are honored greatly tonight in
10 having with us an outstanding American, an out-
11 standing citizen, and I might add, at one time
12 an outstanding Mayor of a major city in America.

13 I first met our guest in 1958 in
14 an elevator, at a Mayors Conference in
15 California, and I have been seeing him at Mayors
16 Conferences constantly since that time, even
17 part of the time when I was not Mayor; a man who,
18 as a part of his assignment as Vice President of
19 the United States, has been given the task of
20 working with the Mayors of America's great
21 cities in solving the problems that are so
22 pressing in a rapidly urbanizing society; a man
23 who has compassion, knowledge and experience,
24 who said, "It is not enough just to analyze the
25 problem; a solution must be found."

1 It has been my pleasure as a member
2 of the Executive Conference of the U. S.
3 Conference of Mayors and as the Mayor of the
4 National League of Cities, to work with the
5 Vice President on many occasions.

6 You came here tonight to listen to
7 him and not to me. It is my great pleasure to
8 present to you a man chosen by another great
9 Texan, Lyndon B. Johnson, as the man he felt
10 best qualified in 1964 to succeed him in the
11 event anything should happen.

12 The Vice President of the United
13 States, the Hon. Hubert H. Humphrey.

14 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you
15 very much. Thank you. Thank you, Mayor Welch.
16 Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for arranging with the
17 Fire Commissioner so that we could get a few
18 more good souls from Houston and other parts of
19 Texas in to this fine hall this evening, this
20 fine banquet room.

21 I can barely see to the very end, but
22 it seems like it is jam-packed full, and might I
23 say that is a good way to have it.

24 Mayor Welch, I have just left a
25 wonderful Texan and a very fine public servant

1 who has been visiting with me earlier this
2 evening, the Speaker of your House of Represen-
3 tatives, Ben Barnes.

4 I am singularly honored tonight to
5 have here at this platform with me two of the
6 most dedicated, two of the most conscientious,
7 forward-looking members of the House of
8 Representatives, two men that you know from this
9 District and this area, I should say, Congressman
10 Bob Casey and Congressman Bob Eckhardt.

11 And I note also, and I am sure you
12 do, that the Chairman of the Democratic State
13 Central Committee, the Chairman of the Party in
14 this state who has surely given a splendid
15 account of himself in building this party, Will
16 Davis, and I am very honored that you are with
17 us.

18 Now, I am going to get right down to
19 business, because this is an evening of not just
20 speechmaking on my part, but of questions and
21 answers of what I call the politics of contact
22 and confrontation, where I go out to the public
23 as a man that seeks the highest office within
24 the government of the American people and submit
25 myself to the privilege of hearing the questions

1 from the constituents and the citizens and,
2 hopefully, to be able to present an intelligent
3 and responsive answer.

4 I said, when I sought this nomination,
5 the nomination of my Party, that I wanted to be
6 able to talk to the American people about the
7 realities that confront us, the realities of the
8 world in which we live, torn, dangerous, and yet
9 very promising; the realities of the America in
10 which we live, richer, stronger than ever before,
11 and yet, today, a scene of the conflict and
12 tension of deep disturbances, ferments and change.

13 I also said that I would, if per-
14 mitted to be the standardbearer of our Party,
15 see to it that we had as a Vice President
16 running mate, not someone that was the product
17 of compromise or arrangement, but, rather,
18 someone, by his talent and his skills, his
19 character and his experience, his background and
20 his maturity, who was thoroughly capable of
21 occupying the highest office of this land,
22 namely, the Presidency. And I have had a hand
23 in selecting that sort of person. I suggested
24 to the Democratic Convention that they nominate
25 and give me the privilege of having as my

1 running mate one of the finest of the United
2 States Senate, a Governor of two terms, a
3 Senator of two terms, a man who has a reputation
4 for personal integrity and political foresight,
5 and the man's name is Edmund Muskie, Senator
6 from Maine.

7 Senator Muskie started his campaign
8 here in the Lone Star State of Texas, and if
9 you have not read into that what you should, let
10 me spell it out.

11 The ticket of Humphrey and Muskie,
12 the Democratic ticket, intends to carry the State
13 of Texas and have the electoral votes of this
14 state, and we intend to rely on you, the people
15 from every walk of life, of every race, creed
16 and color, Catholic, Protestant, and Jew,
17 Regular Democrat, Conservative Democrat,
18 concerned Democrat, independent citizens, a lot
19 of Republicans that can't take what has been
20 offered on their ticket.

21 We intend to have you carry this
22 fight. I am going to give it everything I have,
23 but I am going to ask you to give a full measure
24 of devotion to this cause, as well, and I say
25 that tonight starts the victory march from Texas

1 to the White House and we are going to do it.

2 I know all the headlines. I know all
3 the stories that have been written. But I want
4 to tell you the greatest story of this, as far
5 as this election is concerned, will be unity
6 behind the Democratic ticket and--mark it down--
7 tonight we are going to march together, Governor,
8 Senator, every one of us.

9 I thought we ought to dispense with
10 those matters early.

11 Now, let me talk about some of the
12 substantive matters.

13 We are going to make a great
14 decision in this country. Every election is a
15 great decision. There has never been one that
16 wasn't, but I think the times that we live in
17 indicate that the decision that we make in 1968,
18 November, will have a great bearing upon the
19 future of this land.

20 A little over a hundred years ago,
21 a hundred and fifty, to be exact, Abraham Lincoln
22 proclaimed the Emancipation Proclamation. We had
23 to wait almost a hundred years before we could
24 translate that Proclamation into legal reality,
25 and now we are in the business of translating it

1 into practical reality.

2 I am not merely talking about the
3 emancipation of the slaves or the black. I am
4 talking about the emancipation of the deprived
5 in this country, white and black, and let it be
6 quite clear--let it be not only quite clear, but
7 very clear that there are more poor whites than
8 blacks, more poor rural Americans than urban,
9 that slummism is not just a characteristic of just
10 the cities, but sometimes of the countryside.

11 We are not talking about a race, we
12 are not talking about a color tonight, Ladies and
13 Gentlemen; we are talking about Americans, every
14 kind of an American. And it is the many kinds
15 of Americans that inhabit this state, because
16 Texas is like a little United Nations within
17 itself. It is these many kinds of Americans
18 that make up the vitality, the vibrancy, the
19 strength, the great power of this nation, and I
20 intend, if I am permitted to be the President of
21 this land, to mobilize the resources of the yet
22 untapped human resources of the millions of
23 Americans that have never had a chance.

24 I think that America has just
25 begun to live. I think that our better days are

1 yet to come. I think that our better days are
2 yet to come. I know that there are always the
3 cynics that say, "Well, why does he say that?"
4 Or, "Does he mean it?"

5 But I remember in my young days when
6 people said, in the Depression, that our system
7 was through. I remember there were those that
8 were the great intellectuals of our day that said
9 we never again would be able to give vibrancy
10 and vitality and drive to our free enterprise
11 system. I didn't believe it then and I don't
12 believe it now.

13 There have always been the doubters.
14 There have always been the purveyors of fear and
15 suspicion. They get a little more attention than
16 the regular people. They get a little more
17 attention than the people who are the advocates.
18 They get a little more attention than the people
19 who are positive. It is always the man who
20 spreads the doom and the gloom who is called the
21 prophet; but the greatest prophets were those
22 who saw a better day, not those that saw the end,
23 but those who saw the beginning.

24 And, Ladies and Gentlemen, I don't
25 claim to be a prophet, but I claim to have some

1 understanding of this American people and I say
2 to this audience, particularly to the young
3 people, our greatest is yet to come. Our best
4 days are yet to live. The future belongs to us
5 and we intend to use it and to develop it. We
6 intend to set new standards for this nation,
7 the likes of which it has never known, and I ask
8 you to help me.

9 I don't believe that the American
10 people are going to elect a candidate who likes
11 to parry over our problems or gives generaliza-
12 tions to specific deeds.

13 I place my confidence in the people
14 and I will tell you why: Because I am of the
15 people, not separated from them, but from them,
16 and I believe that I know that this country has
17 within it tremendous resources, tremendous
18 resources of good, to do whatever needs to be
19 done.

20 I have asked my fellow citizens to
21 have confidence in me. That is a great request,
22 but I ask that because I have confidence in them,
23 confidence in their ability to know that when
24 they are being sold a bill of goods, and, believe
25 me, some of them are being sold a bill of goods

1 today or, at least, the attempt is being made,
2 and I have confidence in the people's under-
3 standing that he who buries his head in the sand
4 and sets his face against the wind of inevitable
5 changes can never stop that change, but he will
6 be buried by the sandstorm of Time as it passes
7 him by.

8 I believe that there are those who
9 would bury their head in the sand and I have
10 confidence in the good will of the American
11 people, in their good judgment, in their common
12 sense, and like Adlai Stevenson before me, I
13 intend to talk sense to the American people.

14 I have great confidence in the
15 uncommon decency that characterizes this nation.
16 In short, as I have said, I trust the people and
17 it is because I trust the great, unfrightened,
18 and sometimes silent majority of Americans, that
19 I choose to speak, not to their fears, but to
20 their hopes.

21 Now, let me say a word about this
22 younger generation. It is because I trust this
23 new generation of Americans, this young genera-
24 tion that seems to get so much attention, that I
25 view the occasional excesses and the poor

1 judgment of a few of the young in its proper
2 perspective, and I sense that it is relatively
3 less significant than the decent, energetic and
4 wholesome and creative force which this young
5 generation represents; potentially, the most
6 promising generation that this country has ever
7 produced.

8 My Presidency will be characterized
9 by the open door of the White House to the young.
10 That place will sing with the music of the young.
11 Their voices will be heard, their advice and
12 counsel will be sought, because my public life
13 has been a life of association with young men
14 and women, young in spirit, many young in age,
15 but very young in their hopes and their desires,
16 and it is because I trust this process of
17 democratic decisionmaking that I do not fear, but,
18 indeed, I welcome the free and the frank debate
19 about the issues of our time, which characterize
20 the sometimes troublesome, but fundamentally
21 healthy development within the Democratic Party
22 during the past several months.

23 I would rather have our confusion
24 and our arguments than to have the boredom of
25 Republicanism. I gather you feel exactly the

1 same way.

2 I said to a friend the other day,
3 "America has many firsts." We do many things and
4 we do them in a big way, but it is the first time
5 we have ever had a national wake before the
6 political demise of a candidate.

7 I have also told you some things
8 about my sense of values and I want to represent
9 them to you tonight so that you may know your
10 candidate and you may know what I believe and why
11 I think winning the Presidency so important.
12 To be sure, no greater honor or greater responsi-
13 bility could come to anyone, but winning the
14 Presidency is not worth the price of silence or
15 evasion, and the most fundamental and precious
16 issue of our time is the issue of human rights
17 and human dignity and equal opportunity.

18 I have not compromised on this issue
19 for twenty years in my public life and I have no
20 intention of starting it at this late date.

21 Winning the Presidency is not worth
22 a compact with extremism, the extremism of the
23 Left or the Right, the extremism of the militants
24 of the black or the white. Winning the
25 Presidency is not a popularity contest. Winning

1 the Presidency should be measured on principle,
2 not popularity.

3 Well, it is because I believe these
4 things that I seek that responsibility and that
5 I am prepared to accept the burden that this
6 office imposes.

7 I believe, through years of
8 experience, the maturity that comes with the
9 experience, that I am ready to lead our nation
10 toward the new day which awaits each and every
11 one of us.

12 Now, there are three great realities
13 of our time: The necessity of peace in the
14 world, the necessity for justice and order in
15 our nation, and the paramount necessity of unity
16 among our people.

17 And during this campaign I will
18 continue to speak out, as I have in the past, on
19 each of these challenges and I choose to run and
20 run proudly--and I want every member now of the
21 media to get this, and every person in this
22 audience--I choose to run and run proudly on
23 the Democratic Party's achievements throughout
24 our opportunity to govern this nation, and
25 particularly during these last eight years,

1 achievements which include literally landmarks
2 of excellence, great achievements.

3 Economy of ninety months of consecu-
4 tive growth, Ladies and Gentlemen, this has
5 never happened in the recorded history of man-
6 kind. You take it for granted because some of
7 us have never experienced a Depression or
8 Recession. Those of us that have appreciate it
9 just as a man that has been ill appreciates
10 good health.

11 An achievement of three thousand
12 dollars more real income each year for the
13 average family of four than in 1961. To a
14 rich man that may not mean much, but to many of
15 us it means a new car, it means a college
16 education for a son or a daughter, or it means a
17 vacation or a trip. It means new furniture. It
18 means new things. It may mean just security.

19 The achievement of Medicare, which
20 for the first time has permitted the senior
21 citizens of this land, those who have given of
22 their best during the better years of their
23 lives, to live in dignity and having the blessing
24 of modern medicine and modern hospitalization.

25 The achievement of Project Head

1 Start. Mrs. Humphrey visited a project at Los
2 Angeles today. I hope we are not so cynical, my
3 fellow Americans, that we no longer care about
4 the little ones. I think you can judge the
5 morality of a society by two groups--three
6 groups, the children and what you do with the
7 children, the handicapped and how you treat
8 them, and the elderly.

9 Our Scriptures alone tell us they
10 deserve our respect, and I am happy to tell you
11 that I have been a part of an Administration that
12 has cared for the children as no other Adminis-
13 traion in the history of this Republic, cared
14 for the handicapped as no other Administration
15 in this Republic, and cared for the elderly as
16 no other government and surely no other
17 Administration in this Republic; more senior
18 citizens housing built in four years than in the
19 preceding two hundred.

20 And I point with some justifiable
21 pride to the achievement of a government that
22 saw that over one million young Americans had
23 their chance to go to higher education and college
24 with public support, with scholarships and loans.

25 Over nine million of our youngsters

1 who were the victims of the schools that were
2 called separate and equal, but that were just
3 separate, nine million of them, the beneficiaries
4 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act,
5 the greatest education program that this country
6 has ever known.

7 And the ten million of our fellow
8 Americans who have walked out of the darkness of
9 poverty into the bright sunlight of opportunity,
10 ten million Americans in the last seven years
11 that have come out of poverty, and of those ten
12 million over three and a half million black, who
13 for the first time in their life have had a
14 chance to stand as you and I, citizens of this
15 land.

16 There is much more that we could
17 talk of and a greater record that I shall out-
18 line in the days ahead, but let me make it clear
19 I do not come here to apologize for the Demo-
20 cratic Party or Democratic President. I come
21 here as one that was nurtured in the days of
22 Franklin Roosevelt, that was inspired by the
23 courageous leadership of Harry Truman, whose
24 soul and mind was made the better by the great
25 spirit of Adlai Stevenson, and who has had the

1 opportunity to be a fellow worker in the
2 Democratic Party and one of the leaders in the
3 Congress of the United States under two Presi-
4 dents that got this country moving again and
5 lifted it to new heights, John Kennedy and
6 Lyndon Johnson.

7 So I lay down the gauntlet here
8 tonight. We will put our record against Mr.
9 Nixon's twenty-four hours a day, three hundred
10 and sixty-five days a year. I intend to be
11 judged on my record as compared to his. I think
12 the American people will make the right decision.
13 I have no doubt about it. I do not think the
14 American people are ready to turn this country
15 over to Mr. Richard Milhaus Nixon and Strom
16 Thurmond.

17 So for those of you that were
18 wondering when will your friend, Hubert
19 Humphrey, lay it on the line, we are laying it
20 on the line tonight and we will lay it on the
21 line every night from here on out.

22 Yes, I am proud to have played some
23 little role in some of these achievements which
24 I have noted here this evening, but I want you
25 to know that I am not content with that. I am

1 not one that believes in reciting the pages of
2 history.

3 I ask you to help us make new
4 history and I ask you to help build on the
5 record that we have already established, to
6 build better, to build broader, to build more
7 meaningfully, and I am going to do so with the
8 determination not to narrow the road to peace
9 and justice by either the mistakes of the
10 formulas of the past--and everybody has made
11 some mistakes--and not to limit our achievements
12 by the weight of the past, and I shall do so
13 with the certain objectives in mind, and these
14 are my objectives: To end the war in Vietnam,
15 to stop and put a halt to the rising tide of
16 lawlessness in our cities, to insure a meaningful
17 job for every citizen willing to work, and to
18 guarantee a first-class education for every child
19 born in this land.

20 In other words, to provide a life of
21 meaning and dignity and purpose for every person
22 and I shall do so with the humility born of the
23 knowledge that no man can hope to advance the
24 unfinished work of our society without the help
25 of his God and the support of his people.

1 I intend to work hard enough to merit
2 that support, to earn that support, and I come
3 here tonight in the great State of Texas to ask
4 you to be in the vanguard of this leadership for
5 the new day that America needs and deserves.

6 Now, I have spoken to you from my
7 heart and I have spoken to you as I see it, or,
8 as the young friends say, I have told it like it
9 is, said it like it is.

10 Now, let's hear from you. Question
11 number one.

12 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
13 President, today President Johnson obviously--

14 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Will
15 you please identify yourself?

16 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Richard
17 Dobbins, newswriter, KIKK Radio.

18 Today President Johnson obviously
19 contradicted what you said yesterday, when you
20 said that if elected, that you would attempt to
21 bring some troops home as early as early 1969
22 or late 1968. The President said no one could
23 ever tell.

24 Why did President Johnson deliberately
25 contradict you and why has he not endorsed you

1 for the Presidency?

2 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The
3 question was that I had indicated that some
4 troops might be able to be brought home from
5 South Vietnam, American troops, in early 1969
6 or, hopefully, in late 1968.

7 The gentleman says that the President
8 today stated that no man could make that predic-
9 tion. Is that right?

10 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: That is
11 correct.

12 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: And the
13 second part of the question was why hasn't the
14 President endorsed me.

15 Well, first of all, would somebody
16 bring me the morning newspaper, because one of
17 the Marine Divisions is on its way home.

18 Give me your paper there.

19 I had it up in my room there and I
20 was showing my staff. They are a bunch of
21 doubting Thomases just like you fellows.

22 It is the Post. There is a state-
23 ment, it is the headline in one of your newspapers.
24 I regret, in the haste to come here--I have
25 twenty staff men here. Would somebody please run

1 and get it?

2 They have heard me speak enough; they
3 don't need to hear me again.

4 There is a story that some of the
5 Marines that have been sent to Vietnam, American
6 Marines, are now to be returned. I don't know
7 what the other statement is about.

8 I said that I had hoped that this
9 could happen and my hope--at least, it has been
10 indicated as a fact in the press--now, I always
11 believe what I read in the papers.

12 Now, the second thing is--the second
13 question was: Why hasn't the President endorsed
14 me?

15 The President has not only endorsed
16 me, he has embraced me. I don't think there is
17 a shadow of a doubt in the mind of anyone that
18 the President of the United States would like
19 very much to see the Vice President of the United
20 States to be elected President of the United
21 States. He has said that repeatedly.

22 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Could you
23 comment on the feasibility of a national
24 primary by 1972, and comment on the Conventions,
25 as to what you think of how they work in this

1 country today?

2 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I do believe
3 that our Convention system is in need of a very,
4 very in-depth study and analysis as to whether
5 or not it really meets the modern needs of what
6 we call our modern politics.

7 Senator Gaylord Nielson, the State
8 of Wisconsin, has introduced legislation for the
9 establishment of a high-level commission for
10 both public and private members, to examine the
11 Convention party system as to its adequacies and
12 inadequacies.

13 May I just--this is the Houston Post.
14 It is dated Tuesday, September 10. It says:
15 "Humphrey arrives tonight at 6:30." I am sorry
16 I was a little late.

17 "Marine regiment withdrawal is
18 first for the United States," a UPI story.
19 "Spokesman said it was the first withdrawal of
20 an American troop unit from the Vietnam War."

21 It is a rather extended story. I
22 think that it verifies what I had hoped. I
23 didn't say that it would happen. Who can
24 reflect what will happen? One can express his
25 hopes and I had said earlier that I thought it

1 could happen and that it might happen and that
2 I hoped it would happen.

3 And if this is a true story--and I
4 gather it would be or it wouldn't occupy such a
5 prominent position in this press--I would say
6 that we have some reason to be at least a little
7 grateful for the return of some of the men from
8 that part of the world.

9 Now, may I get back to your question,
10 sir.

11 The commission of Senator Nielson
12 is needed.

13 Secondly, I have long supported, and
14 did so when the late Senator Estes Kefauver
15 favored a national primary. I recognize that it
16 has its inadequacies and its adequacies, but on
17 balancing it, it has more to offer to it than
18 it has limitations. I do believe that the time
19 is at hand for the revaluation and study of the
20 total Convention process, and also I know that
21 our Party at Chicago, over the din outside the
22 Convention, made some very forward strides in
23 terms of modernizing the caucus machinery, the
24 Convention machinery of the Democratic Party.

25 This is something that our fellow

1 Republicans did not do.

2 Yes? It is very hard for me to
3 see over the lights.

4 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
5 President, can you tell me what particularly you
6 know about the poverty in the United States,
7 particularly in Texas and the Rio Grande Valley?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I
9 know--

10 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Firsthand.

11 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I know
12 primarily, my dear lady, what I have read, and I
13 know primarily what I have been told by some of
14 those who live there.

15 I do not claim to be an expert about
16 the poverty in Texas. I can tell you something
17 about the poverty in Minnesota, and I know about
18 the poverty in our great metropolitan areas, but
19 I think it would be a reasonably factual state-
20 ment to say that there is not a state in this
21 land that does not have within it the poor
22 people.

23 I do not say this is a part of any
24 premeditated conspiracy on the part of any
25 leadership. It is--the poor have been with us

1 since the beginning of organized society, but I
2 think for the first time we have a chance to do
3 something about at least alleviating some of
4 the conditions of poverty.

5 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Do you intend
6 to do that?

7 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, my
8 dear lady, I have been in the forefront of that
9 fight all of my public life. I have been one of
10 those that has worked for those programs, public
11 and private, and I don't think they can all be
12 done by government, public and private, that
13 would help alleviate these conditions.

14 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
15 President, a recent issue of Life Magazine
16 quoted you as saying that you could have lived
17 with the minority platform on Vietnam.

18 Under what conditions would you have
19 favored a conditional retreat in Vietnam?

20 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Let me
21 make it clear that any Presidential candidate
22 will find features in the platform that he
23 doesn't particularly like, even though he
24 accepts the nomination of his Party. It has
25 happened before. And I supported, and still do

1 support the majority plank in the platform.

2 I don't say that it is a perfect
3 plank, but I think it represents a rather
4 sensible point of view.

5 I thought that the minority plank,
6 when it calls for unconditional cessation of
7 the bombing, I thought that went too far. But
8 I also noted that it did not call for uncondi-
9 tional immediate bombing and there was a certain
10 amount of fusing of the words.

11 Now, let me again repeat to you that
12 I said before the Convention that I would support
13 the nominee of my Party, and if that had been my
14 colleague from Minnesota, Senator McCarthy, then
15 I would have gladly supported him. If it had
16 been my friend, Senator McGovern from South
17 Dakota, who was my neighbor for more than ten
18 years, I would have gladly supported him.

19 We agreed on the rhetoric of the
20 platform, but I happen to believe that if
21 either one of the had become President, that the
22 realities of life, that the hard, cold realities
23 of the situation would have had a much more
24 controlling influence upon their decisions than
25 a printed word of the platform that was fought

1 over in Convention, and that is why I have said
2 in my acceptance speech that I would not feel
3 bound by the policies of the past in confronting
4 the realities of the future.

5 Let it be very clear that all three
6 of us that I have mentioned, Senator McCarthy,
7 and Senator McGovern, and myself, had one
8 common objective, the attainment of a just and
9 honorable peace in Vietnam. But I might add
10 that this was more than some people were able
11 to comprehend. None of us recommended unilateral
12 withdrawal. All of us felt that it would be
13 desirable to have a cease fire. All of us said
14 that we should have a systematic withdrawal of
15 the forces, as the Army of South Vietnam was able
16 to take over. All of us said that there should
17 be no permanent bases in South Vietnam. All
18 three of us blended ourselves to the concept of
19 free elections, one man, one vote; that all
20 persons should participate in those elections
21 and be eligible for office, if they would accept
22 the rules of a peaceful election and renounce
23 violence of obtaining political power.

24 And there were the points of agree-
25 ment, and some of those points were in the

1 minority plank, as they were in the majority
2 plank.

3 The difference was that one said
4 unconditional cessation of the bombing, and then
5 went on to state, of course, we must protect our
6 troops in the South.

7 I cannot imagine any man being
8 President of the United States that would take
9 a precipitous action unless he thought it would
10 lend itself to peace and unless he thought he
11 was protecting the lives of American men that
12 were committed to battle; I don't care what
13 your platform is.

14 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Are you
15 saying, then, sir, that you were misquoted by
16 Life Magazine?

17 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am not
18 saying I was misquoted, at all. I am simply
19 saying what my position is. It has been stated
20 about three hundred times now.

21 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Do you favor
22 replacing the Army with a well-paid, high
23 efficient Army, like Adlai Stevenson did?

24 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I favor
25 the lottery system or the random selection

1 system, rather than the present system.

2 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. President,
3 you have said that the post-Vietnam budget will
4 contain an adequate amount for the rehabilita-
5 tion of the ghettos. Do you think that this
6 money will be retained for the rehabilitation
7 of the ghettos? Can you expound on this?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPRHEY: One of
9 reasons that I have been talking about it is
10 that we are going to have to build a public
11 opinion for it, mainly in others, that the
12 savings which come as a dividend of peace will
13 be directed toward the great social needs of
14 this nation.

15 I served in Congress when the war in
16 Korea was over, and that was a very costly war.
17 It took a larger portion of the budget and it
18 took many lives. And what happened when the war
19 was over, there were poor, more than there are
20 now; slums, as filthy as they are now. There
21 were illiterate, more than now. There were
22 social problems of unemployment after the war.

23 And what happened to the savings
24 after the war was over? The savings from the
25 war went into tax reductions and you had three

1 Recessions in eight years and no real development
2 in this nation.

3 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: You also
4 note that because of the fact that so many black
5 people have been hired by private industries as
6 extras for the war boom, wouldn't you say that
7 this would throw off more black people and
8 create more riots than if you continue the war
9 economy as it is? Wouldn't this cause more riots
10 and more funds would be needed for riot control?

11 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I say
12 that the economy, over the last ninety months,
13 has continued to grow at a growth rate never
14 known before, four and a half per cent. And it
15 is my view that if we can keep this economy
16 going forward on a sensible base, with adequate
17 fiscal policies, that we will have jobs--I don't
18 think there is any doubt at all but that we will
19 have jobs.

20 There is a tremendous need in this
21 country, and all we need to have is what I call
22 those peace dividends, namely, those resources
23 that we can save when the war is over, to be
24 put into the public sector in our urban programs
25 and in our schools and training programs. There

1 are such tremendous needs, we don't need to look
2 forward to any rise in unemployment.

3 What we ought to look forward to is
4 an opportunity to start building this nation
5 anew.

6 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
7 President, I don't happen to be a citizen of the
8 great State of Texas. I am a citizen of
9 Georgia and my name is Clarence Hubert Snipes.

10 I have only one question to direct
11 to you, sir. No one could debate that Kennedy
12 beat Nixon strictly from the TV debates.

13 You have shown great sincerity in
14 your voice and mannerisms tonight and I am
15 tremendously impressed and I am not trying to
16 flatter you, and I am sure that this crowd and
17 everyone in America would like to see you and
18 Nixon go ahead and talk.

19 Now, how about it?

20 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: My good
21 friend, this is a recommendation that I have
22 made myself. I want you to know that I am in
23 shape and ready to go.

24 You know, since you have asked this
25 question and been so kind in your remarks, I

1 think you ought to recollect that in 1960 I gave
2 Mr. Kennedy his spring training. You know, I
3 never had the slightest doubt as to how that
4 election was going to come out because I knew
5 if I couldn't beat Mr. Kennedy, I didn't think
6 Mr. Nixon could, and I feel the same way now.

7 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
8 President, your opposition last week stated that
9 he could bring an early end to the war.

10 Do you think that any one candidate
11 could bring an honorable end any sooner than any
12 other candidate?

13 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think
14 that the greatest contribution that the candi-
15 date can make at this particular time is to make
16 it very clear to the government in North Vietnam,
17 to the regime in Hanoi, that it is in their
18 interest to proceed with substantive negotiations
19 and to seek a political settlement in Paris
20 between now and January 20, rather than to wait
21 around and think that partisan debate and playing
22 to the crowds in a partisan election will result
23 in concessions after January 20, under which
24 the Communists wouldn't get in the legitimate
25 process between now and January the 20th.

1 In other words, they ought to cut
2 out the killing and settle down to the nego-
3 tiating because I believe that the greatest
4 service that Mr. Nixon and myself can perform
5 for this country and for the cause of peace is
6 to have it unmistakably clear that we are not
7 going to play politics with Vietnam; that we are
8 going to ask the people of North Vietnam and
9 their government to recognize that partisan
10 debate in America does not result in the
11 weakening of our determination on the battle-
12 field or at the conference table.

13 I know of no one that wants peace
14 any more than the President of the United States,
15 no one that wants it any more.

16 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
17 President, we have been talking about the kind
18 of honorable settlement we are going to get,
19 but, basically, what right do we have to send
20 our troops to participate in a civil war on
21 behalf of a military dictatorship that imprisons
22 men like "Traun Ben Shu," that cannot hold
23 elections without disqualifying its best-known
24 opponents, whose vice president is an avid
25 admirer of Adolph Hitler, and who seems to be

1 incapable to carry out the basic social and
2 economic reforms to win the support of its
3 people?

4 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Are you
5 through, sir?

6 May I just reflect for a moment on
7 your rather extended question.

8 First of all, South Vietnam has a
9 treaty arrangement with the United States. We
10 are a member of SEATO, we have what we call
11 protocol arrangements which are treaty arrange-
12 ments with South Vietnam.

13 Secondly, it is not a civil war.
14 There are aspects of civil war, but the troops
15 from North Vietnam are not indigenous to South
16 Vietnam and they are not a part of the civil
17 war.

18 For a long time North Vietnam even
19 denied that it had any troops in South Vietnam
20 and one of the achievements of the conference in
21 Paris is that they have admitted that they have
22 troops in South Vietnam.

23 Of course, it was ridiculous for
24 them to deny this. I think we have some idea
25 of the quality of the--when you find that the

1 only support the Soviet Union had in its naked
2 aggression in Czechoslovakia was the government
3 of North Vietnam.

4 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: (Question
5 not audible.)

6 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Now, just
7 a minute. You asked the question.

8 The government of South Vietnam is
9 an elected government. To be sure, not everybody
10 participated, but the government of the United
11 States didn't have full participation in its
12 first election. The capitol of our country was
13 moved eleven times. The Constitution of the
14 United States was never written by elected
15 officials. They were all appointed. I think it
16 was a good job; don't misunderstand me.

17 What is more, the Constitutional
18 Convention of the United States permitted nobody
19 to observe its activities. The doors were locked
20 and even Benjamin Franklin had two guards
21 attached to him in case he had an extra drink
22 of wine and he became a little gregarious.

23 One hundred persons were invited
24 to the Constitutional Convention; fifty-five
25 came; thirty-nine stayed; thirty-eight signed,
and it took them two years to get the Constitu-

1 tion and get it ratified.

2 Now, the Constitutional Assembly of
3 Vietnam, with all of its limitations, was an
4 elected Constitutional Assembly and I think it
5 is good to reflect.

6 First of all, they said they will
7 never have an election. Well, they had one.
8 That destroyed that hope of some.

9 The next was that the Constitutional
10 Assembly would never agree, and the next was
11 that President Chu, who was the head of the
12 Directorate, would never accept the constitu-
13 tion, but he did.

14 And the next was that the Assembly
15 would never meet, that the National Assembly
16 would never take place, and they did, and we
17 sent observers from this country, governors,
18 churchmen, and Bishop Lucey right here from this
19 state, to observe that election.

20 As elections come and go, and we
21 have had all kinds in the United States--you
22 know, we are not without sin ourselves--as
23 elections come and go, it was a pretty fair
24 election and over eighty per cent of the
25 electorate voted, despite the efforts of the

1 Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese to terrorize
2 the population, despite the fact that candidates
3 for public office were killed, despite the fact
4 that election officials were kidnapped, a
5 president and a vice president were elected.

6 You say it was not a majority vote.
7 Well, eleven Presidents of the United States
8 never got a majority vote, either. Some of them
9 had rather slim pluralities and even in our
10 time the late John Kennedy did not get a
11 majority vote. He had less than fifty per
12 cent. John Adams had considerably less, and so
13 did others.

14 All I am saying to you is that if
15 you want to compare elections, the one in South
16 Vietnam is one hundred per cent better than any
17 they have had in North Vietnam, if you want to
18 make comparisons.

19 I don't want to have it understood
20 that I think it was too good. I think it was
21 better, may I say, than the area had had before,
22 and the present government of South Vietnam has
23 has a much broader base now.

24 The new Prime Minister is a man
25 known for integrity and for courage and honesty.

1 His name is Houng--H-o-u-n-g--and he is a good
2 man.

3 Over twenty provincial chiefs have
4 been removed for corruption. Over two hundred
5 officers of the military have been summarily
6 court martialed for corruption, and everything
7 that has happened is before the public.

8 I think, my fellow Americans, that
9 this little country that has eight hundred
10 thousand men under arms, which would be the
11 equivalent of sixteen million Americans, based
12 on population, and has been at war for the last
13 twenty years, does not deserve the constant
14 harassment and condemnation of a country that
15 finds better than twenty-five thousand of our
16 best sons dead in that war.

17 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
18 President, my name is Ricks Erinson. I listened
19 to McCarthy in the park in Chicago and I listened
20 to Nixon last week in Hermann Park and I have
21 listened to you here tonight, and I think you
22 have it in common with McCarthy, contrary to
23 what some may say, and as far as I can see, you
24 have been telling the truth. That is a personal
25 opinion, but my question is this:

1 McCarthy indicated in the park that
2 he would remain within the system, but he was
3 not going to work for either of these candi-
4 dates. And now a lot of us that were for
5 McCarthy, since he has removed himself, would
6 like to ask you, Mr. Vice President, why I
7 should support you?

8 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Because
9 I think I offer you the best alternative of
10 what you have available.

11 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: Mr. Vice
12 President, on behalf of the University of
13 Houston Young Democrats, the Lee College Young
14 Democrats, the Harris County Young Democrats,
15 and all of the Young Democrats in this area,
16 we come here tonight with a question that is in
17 our minds.

18 We represent not the Hippies or the
19 Yippies on our campus, but, rather, the young
20 people that believe in America, who still,
21 though, feel that they don't have an active
22 voice, and who feel that they deserve an active
23 voice. We have to contend with these people,
24 Mr. Vice President, and I ask you how are you
25 going to help us tell them that they do have an

1 active voice in your campaign by joining our
2 Young Democrats and working within the system?

3 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The average
4 age of the campaign committee that worked for me
5 prior to the Convention, of all those that were
6 working, was twenty-six. I thought we had a lot
7 of young people. We didn't get as much atten-
8 tion of having young people, but we had a lot of
9 them and we had thousands of young people in
10 Chicago, just exactly as we have them here and
11 all those across this country, because they
12 happen to be supporting my candidacy. Maybe
13 they are not carrying signs, but I have nothing
14 against that because, in fact, I have carried a
15 lot of them in my time.

16 I am a very tolerant man about that,
17 but because they do not engage in that, they
18 seldom get that much attention.

19 Now, what is that I can do that will
20 deserve the confidence of the young people, and
21 may I say that I want to deserve it. As I told
22 one delegation, I never expected anybody's
23 support. I wanted to earn it.

24 My political life has been
25 characterized with an association by youth. The

1 men who work in my office as Vice President are
2 young men. I have been one of those that helped
3 sponsor the Student Intern Program in this
4 government, to bring young people into Washing-
5 ton. I have helped through that program to
6 secure \$1,400,000 for needy young men and women
7 across this country to secure an education.
8 I think that means something.

9 I have been a teacher at a great
10 university, as well as a student, and my
11 students seemed to find in that teacher an
12 understanding mind and a sympathetic spirit.

13 I want, if I am elected, to see
14 to and to consider and to have the confidence
15 of young people. I want to listen to them.
16 I do not brush aside their ideas. I am not at
17 all sure that those of us in positions of
18 responsibility are right. We have to judge on
19 the basis of what information we have, but we
20 must be constantly seeking new information to
21 improve our judgment.

22 I want the idealism of young people
23 in the political scene. I want them in the
24 caucuses. I want them to be impressed with
25 political leadership, and there isn't

1 particularly a sort of rebel faction in a party
2 that is very young, because I have noted over
3 the years that once they gain power, they get
4 to acting somewhat like the rest of us, very
5 much so.

6 I have not lost my sense of idealism,
7 not one bit. I have called upon the young in
8 this nation to help us in what I consider to be
9 the great problems that confront us, to help
10 us change the attitude of this country about
11 people, to help us break down racism in this
12 country, to help us help the deprive in this
13 country.

14 I have gone from college campus to
15 college campus as Vice President, over seventy
16 of them, and thirty junior colleges, and techni-
17 cal institutions, calling upon young people to
18 take their enthusiasm into politics, into
19 service, volunteer from time to time to a
20 mental retardation institute, volunteer to help
21 the handicapped, volunteer to tutoring in the
22 ghettos, volunteer their lives to help young
23 people across this country and older people.

24 I am the author of the Peace Corps,
25 which Mr. Nixon called a fanciful idea and a

1 scheme for draft dodgers.

2 I am the author of the Job Center.

3 I have fought for these things. My
4 loyalty is with the needs of the young and I
5 don't intend to give it up and if I am President,
6 as I said earlier, young men and women in
7 America will find out they have a partner and
8 somebody they can work with.

9 VOICE FROM THE FLOOR: I want to
10 tell you how wonderful you look to us tonight.
11 From all the reports we have had and the stories
12 we have heard, I can't see any hawk nose or
13 dove wings, but you look just like the fine,
14 wonderful man I met in 1952 and for whom I
15 hope to be able to work this year.

16 Now, my question is: Will you
17 please ask the people who have been given slips
18 of registration for work in the Party in your
19 campaign, to give them to any lady in the
20 audience that has a white and blue badge on?

21 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I sure
22 will.

23 Thank you, very, very much. There
24 comes a time when even the best of good times
25 must come to an end. I hope you have enjoyed

it. I have.

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Mayor Welch

September 10, 1968

↳ Ben Barnes

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

↳ Will Davis

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

↳ Bob Carey

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

↳ Bob Eckhardt

HOUSTON, TEXAS

Musker

↳ Throughout history, there come moments when the people and the leaders of a nation are faced with a crisis; a crisis of conscience, a test of will, a moment of almost unimaginable implications for their own and for their children's futures.

↳ Sometimes such a crisis stands out starkly, and each of us can quickly recognize its importance. At other times, it simply arises out of a combination of events, and even those most affected may be unaware of the peril which they face.

↳ Tonight, my fellow countrymen, we stand at such a moment.

Realities

-2-

For the decision which each of you must make between now and the first Tuesday in November is as important as any of you have ever made. It is a decision which will have an enormous amount to do with the kind of world your children and your children's children will live in long after Dick Nixon and Hubert Humphrey have passed from the scene.

That decision is an infinitely complex one ~~but it can be stated rather simply.~~

Can the American people be made to believe that the fears and frustrations of life in the twentieth century can somehow be made to vanish, by papering over our problems and ignoring our shortcomings?

Or are the American people made of sterner stuff than ~~the~~ Are they better than too many of our ~~press and~~ pollsters and politicians give them credit for?

Are they strong enough to bear the responsibilities of power?

... Compassionate enough to recognize that, for many of our fellow citizens, life is not what it was meant to be?

... And smart enough, and tough enough, to find our way through, to a future which can yet be ours?

As for myself, and speaking as the leader of my party, I know the answer to that question.

I have asked my fellow citizens to place their confidence in me.

And I am placing my confidence in them.

-- Confidence in their ability to know when they are being sold a bill of goods, ~~promised~~ ^{promising} a future of false comfort and easy living.

-- Confidence in their understanding that he who buries his head ^{in the sand} or sets his face against the winds of inevitable change

cannot stop that change, but will be buried by the sandstorm
of time as it passes him by.

-- And confidence in their good will -- and their good
judgment ... in their common sense -- and their uncommon
decency.

In short, my friends, I trust the American people.

It is because I trust the great, unfrightened majority
of Americans, that I choose to speak, not to their fears, but
to their hopes ... to call forth not the bitterness and resentment
of life, but the vision of a New Day for all mankind.

It is because I trust this new generation of Americans
that I view the occasional excesses and poor judgment of some
of our young people, in perspective, relatively less significant
than the decent, energetic and creative force which they represent --
potentially the most promising generation this great nation has

ever produced.

It is because I trust the process of democratic decision-making that I did not fear, but welcomed, the free and frank debate about the issues of our time which characterized the sometimes troublesome but fundamentally healthy developments within the Democratic party during the last several months.

↳ It is because I trust the strength of the ties which bind our destinies together that I refuse to pit one group of Americans against another -- poor against rich, black against white, young against old.

↳ Winning the Presidency is not worth the price of silence or evasion on the issue of human rights.

↳ Winning the Presidency is not worth a compact with extremism.

I ask our nation not to be of one mind, but to be of one spirit.

And it is because I trust the toughness and resilience of that American spirit that I do not shrink from the hard decisions of the Presidency.

I seek that responsibility.

I accept that burden.

I am ready to lead our nation toward that New Day which awaits us.

I know, and you know, that that New Day is one on which we shall have to come to terms with the three great realities of our time:

↳ The necessity of peace in the world; the necessity for justice and order in our nation; and the paramount necessity for unity among our people.

During this campaign, I have spoken out on each of those challenges, and I shall continue to do so.

~~I shall do so with pride that I carry forward the tradition of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, of Harry Truman and John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.~~

I choose to run -- and run proudly -- on the Democratic party's achievements during the last eight years -- achievements that include: —

- Three thousand dollars more real income each year for the average family of four than in 1961;
- Medicare and increased Social Security;
- Head Start for children from disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- A million young Americans in college with public support who otherwise would have been unable to attend.

- *cut to Educ.*

- *Millions out of parently*

I am proud to have played a role in these achievements.
... And I intend to build on that record in the next four years.

I shall do so with determination not to narrow the road to peace and justice by either the mistakes or the formulas of the past -- and not to limit our horizons by the achievements of the past.

I shall do so with certain objectives firmly in mind:

- ↳ -- To end the war in Vietnam;
- ↳ -- To stop the rising tide of lawlessness in our cities;
- ↳ -- To ensure a job for every citizen willing to work, and a first-class education for every child born in this land;
- ↳ -- And to provide a life of meaning and dignity and purpose for every American.

And I shall do so with the humility born of the knowledge that no man can hope to advance the unfinished work of our society without the help of his God and the support of his people.

I intend to earn that support.

Thank you.

* * *

For Release:
Wednesday ~~PM~~'S
September 11, 1968

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
HOUSTON, TEXAS
SEPTEMBER 10, 1968

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PAGE TWO

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PAGE THREE

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(more)

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PAGE FIVE

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Thank you.

#

Remarks Q+A
San Jacinto Room
Houston, Texas

San Jacinto Room
Ice Hotel
Houston, Texas
Wednesday, September 10, 1966
9:55 p.m.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for arranging through the fire commissioner that we could get a few more good souls from Houston and other parts of this Texas into this fine hall this evening, this fine banquet room. I can barely see to the very end of it but it seems like it is jam packed full and may I say that is a good way to have it.

(Applause)

Mayor Welch, have just left a wonderful Texan and a very fine public servant who has been visiting with me earlier this evening, the Speaker of your House of Representatives, Earl Barnes.

(Applause)

I am similarly honored tonight to have here at this platform with me two of the most dedicated, two of the most conscientious, forward looking members of the House of Representatives, two men that you know from this district and this area, Congressman Charles W. Stenholm and Congressman John L. Pickens.

(Applause) (Whistles)

And I note also, and am sure you do, that the chairman of the Democratic State Central Committee, the chairman of the party in this state, who has surely given a splendid account of himself in building this party, is here with us tonight, Bill Davis, and I am very honored and pleased that you are with us tonight.

(Applause)

I am going to get right down to business because this is an evening of not just speech making on my part, but of questions and answers of what

I call the politics of contact and confrontation, where I go out to the public as a man that seeks the highest office within the gift of the American people and submit myself to the privilege of hearing the questions from the constituents and the citizens, and hopefully to be able to present an intelligent and responsive answer.

I said when I sought this nomination, the nomination of my party, that I wanted to be able to talk to the American people about the realities that confront us, the realities of the world in which we live, tough, dangerous, and not very promising. The realities of the America in which we live, richer, stronger than ever before and yet today a scene of conflict and tension, of deep disturbance, ferment and change. I also said that I would, if permitted to be the standard bearer of our party, see to it that we had as a Vice Presidential running mate not someone that was the product of compromise or arrangement but rather, someone who by his talents and his skills, his character and his experience, his track record and his maturity, was thoroughly capable of occupying the highest office of this land, namely, the Presidency, and I have had a hand in selecting that sort of person. I suggested to the

Democratic convention that they nominate and give me the privilege of having as my running mate one of the finest of the United States Senate, a governor of two terms, a Senator of two terms, a man who has a reputation for personal integrity, political foresight, and this man's name is Edmund Muskie, Senator from Maine and my Vice Presidential candidate.

(Applause)

Senator Muskie started his campaign here in the Lone Star State of Texas and if you have not read into that what you should, let me spell it out. The ticket of Humphrey and Muskie, the Democratic ticket, intends to carry the State of Texas, and have the electoral votes of this state.

(Applause)

And we intend to rely on you, you the people, people from every walk of life, of every race, creed and color, catholic, protestant and Jew, regular Democrat, conservative Democrat, liberal Democrat, concerned Democrat, independent citizens and a lot of Republicans that can't take what has been offered on their ticket.

(Applause)

We intend to have you carry this fight. I am going to give it everything I have, but, I am going to ask you to give a full measure of devotion to this cause as well, and I say that tonight starts the victory march from Texas to the White House and we are going to do it.

(Applause)

I have been reading all the headlines. I know all the stories that have been written, but I want to tell you the greatest story of them all as far as this election is concerned will be the unity of the Democratic party in this state behind the Democratic ticket and mark it down right tonight, ladies and gentlemen, we are going to march together, Governor, Senator, Congressmen, every one of us.

(Applause)

I thought we ought to dispense with these matters early. Now, let me talk to you about some of the substantive matters.

We are going to make a great decision in this country. Every election is a great decision. There has never been one that wasn't but I think the times that we live in indicate that the decision that we make in 1968, November, will have a great bearing upon the future of this land. A little over a 100 years ago, 105 to be exact, Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the Emancipation Proclamation. We had to wait almost a 100 years before we could translate that proclamation into legal reality. And now, we are in the business of translating it into practical reality.

(Applause)

And I am not merely talking about the emancipation of the slaves or the black. I am talking about the emancipation of the deprived in this country, white and black, and let it be quite clear -- let it be not only quite clear but very clear that there are more poor whites than blacks, more poor rural Americans than urban, that slumism is not a characteristic just of the cities but sometimes of the countryside.

We are not talking about a race. We are not talking about a color tonight, ladies and gentlemen. We are talking about Americans, every kind of an American, and it is the many kinds of Americans that inhabit this state, because Texas is like a little United Nations within itself, it is these many kinds of Americans that make up the vitality, the vibrancy, the strength, the great power of this nation, and I intend, if I am permitted to be the President of this land, to mobilize the resources of the yet untapped human

resource of the millions of Americans that have never had a chance. I think that America has just begun to live.

(Applause)

I think that our better days are yet to come.

(Applause)

I think that our better days are yet to come. Oh, I know there are always the cynics that say, well, why does he say that or does he mean it, but I remember in my young days when people said in the depression that our system was through. I remember there were those who were the great intellectuals even of our day that said that we never again would be able to give vibrancy and vitality and drive to our free enterprise system. I didn't believe it then and I don't believe it now.

(Applause)

There have always been the doubters. There have always been the purveyors of fear and suspicion. They get a little more attention than the regular people. They get a little more attention than the people who are the advocates. They get a little more attention than the people who are positive.

It is always the man that spreads the doom and the gloom that seems to be called the prophet, but the greatest prophets were those that saw a better day, not those that saw the end, but those that saw the beginning. And, ladies and gentlemen, I do not claim to be a prophet but I claim to have some understanding of the American nation and the American people, and I say to this audience, particularly of the young people that are here tonight, our greatness is yet to come. Our best days are yet to be lived. The future belongs to us and we intend to use it and we intend to develop it. We intend to set new standards for this nation the likes of which this world has never known and I ask you to help me.

(Applause)

And I don't believe that the American people are going to elect a candidate who likes to paper over our problems, or who gives generalizations to specific needs. I place my confidence in the people and I will tell you why, because I am of the people, not separated from them, but from them, and I believe that I know that this country has within it tremendous resources, tremendous resources of good, to do whatever needs to be done. I have asked my fellow citizens to have confidence in me. That is a great request. But, I ask that because I have confidence in them, confidence in their ability to know that when they are being sold a bill of goods, and believe me, some of them are being sold a bill of goods today or at least the attempt is being made --

(Applause)

-- and I have confidence in the people's understanding that he who buries his head in the sand and sets his face against the winds of inevitable change can never stop that change, but he will be burdened by the sand storm of time as it passes him by.

I believe that there are those who would bury their heads in the sand, and I have confidence in the good will of the American people, in their good judgment, and like Adlai Stevenson before me, I intend to talk sense to the American people.

(Applause)

And I have great confidence in the uncommon decency that characterizes this nation. In short, as I have said, I trust the people, and it is because I trust the great unfrightened and sometimes silent majority of Americans that I choose to speak not to their fears but to their hopes.

(Applause)

Now, let me say a word about this younger generation. It is because I trust this new generation of Americans, this young generation that seems to get so much attention, that I view the occasional excesses and the poor judgment of a few of the young in its proper perspective, and I sense that it is relatively less significant than the decent, energetic, and wholesome and creative force which this young generation represents, potentially the most promising generation that this country has ever produced.

(Applause)

And my presidency will be characterized by the open door of the White House to the young. That place will sing with the music of the young.

(Applause)

Their voices will be heard, their advice and counsel will be sought, because my public life has been a life of association with young men and women, young in spirit, many young in age, but very young in their hopes and their desires, and it is because I trust this process of democratic decision-making that I do not fear but indeed, I welcome the free and the frank debate about the issues of our time which characterize the sometimes troublesome but fundamentally healthy developments within the Democratic Party during the last several months.

I would rather have our confusion and our argument than to have the boredom of republicanism.

(Applause and whistles)

And, I gather you feel exactly the same way,

(Applause)

I said to a friend the other day, America has many firsts. We do many things and we do them in a big way, but it is the first time we have ever had a national wake before the political demise of a candidate.

(Applause)

I have also told you some things about my sense of values and I want to repeat them to you tonight so that you may know your candidate and you may know what I believe and what I think. Winning the Presidency, so important to be sure, no greater honor or greater responsibility could come to anyone, but winning the Presidency is not worth the price of silence or evasion on the most fundamental and most precious issue of our time, the issue of human rights and human dignity and equal opportunity.

(Applause)

I have never compromised on this issue for 20 years in my public life and I have no intention of starting it at this late date.

(Applause)

And winning the Presidency is not worth a compact with extremism, the extremism of the left or the right, the extremism of the militant of the black or the white. Winning the Presidency is not a popularity contest. Winning the Presidency should be measured on principle, not popularity.

(Applause)

Well, it is because I believe these things that I seek that responsibility and that I am prepared to accept the burden that this office imposes. I believe through years of experience the maturity that comes with the refiners fire of experience, that I am ready to lead our nation towards the new day which awaits each and everyone of us.

(Applause)

Now, there are three great realities of our time, the necessity of peace in the world, the necessity for justice and order in our nation, and the paramount necessity of unity amongst our people, and during this campaign

I will continue to speak out as I have in the past on each of these challenges, and I choose to run and run proudly -- and I want every member now of the media to get this, and every person in this audience -- I choose to run and run proudly on the Democratic Party's achievements throughout our opportunity to govern this nation and particularly during these last eight years,

(Applause)

and achievements which include literally landmarks of excellence, great achievements. An economy of 90 months of consecutive growth. Ladies and gentlemen, this has never happened in the recorded history of mankind. You take it for granted because many of us have never experienced a depression or a recession. Those of us that have appreciate it just as a man has been ill appreciates good health.

(Applause)

An achievement of \$3,000 more real income each year for the average family of four than in 1961. To a rich man that may not mean much, but to many of us, it means a new car. It means a college education for a son or a daughter. Or it means a vacation or a trip. It means new furniture. It means new things. It may mean just security.

An achievement of Medicare which for the first time has permitted the senior citizens of this land, those who have given of their best during the better years of their life, to live in dignity and to have the blessing of modern healing and modern medicine and hospitalization.

(Applause)

The achievement of Project Head Start. Mrs. Humphrey visited a project at Los Angeles today. I hope that we are not so cynical, my fellow Americans, that we no longer care about the little ones. I think you can judge the mortality of a society by two groups, three groups. The child and what you do with the child. The handicapped, and how you treat them. And the elderly whom Scriptures alone tell us deserve our respect. And, I am happy to tell you that I have been a part of an Administration that has cared for the children as no other Administration in the history of this Republic;

(Applause)

cared for the handicapped as no other Administration in this Republic;

(Applause)

and cared for the elderly as no other government and surely no other Administration in this Republic.

More senior citizens housing built in four years than the preceding 200.

(Applause)

And I point with some justifiable pride to the achievements of a government that saw that over one million young Americans had their chance to go to higher education and college, with public support,

(Applause)

with scholarships and loans, and over nine million of our deprived youngsters who were the victims of schools that were called separate and equal but were just separate, nine million of them the beneficiaries of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the greatest Federal aid program that this country has ever known.

(Applause)

And ten million of our fellow Americans who have walked out of the darkness of poverty into the bright sunlight of opportunity. Ten million Americans in the last seven years that have come out of poverty, and of these ten million, over three and a half million black who for the first time in their life have

had a chance to stand as you and I, citizens of this land with its benefits.
(Applause)

There is much more that we could talk of and a greater record that I shall outline in the days ahead, but let me make it clear, I do not come here to apologize for the Democratic Party or Democratic Presidents.

(Applause) (Whistles)

I come here as one that was nurtured in the days of Franklin Roosevelt, that was inspired by the courageous leadership of Harry Truman,

(Applause)

whose soul and mind was made the better by the great spirit of Adlai Stevenson,

(Applause)

and who has had the opportunity to be a fellow worker in democracy and one of the leaders in the Congress of the United States under two presidents that got this country moving again and lifted it to new heights, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

(Applause)

So, I lay down the gauntlet here tonight. We will put our record against Mr. Nixon's 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

(Applause)

And, I intend to be judged on my record as compared to his.

I think the American people will make the right decision. I have no doubt about it. I do not think the American people are about ready to turn this country over to Mr. Richard Milhouse Nixon and Strom Thurmond. I just don't think so.

(Applause) (Whistles)

So, for those of you that were wondering when will your friend, Hubert Humphrey, lay it on the line, we are laying it on the line tonight and we will lay it on every day from here on out.

(Applause)

Yes, I am proud to have played some little role in some of these achievements which I have noted here this evening but I want you to know that I am not content with that. I am not one that believes in reciting the pages of history. I ask you to help us make new history and I ask you to help building on the record that we have already established, to build better, to build broader, to build more meaningful, and I am going to do so with determination, not to narrow the road to peace and justice by either the mistake of the formulas of the past, and everybody has made some mistakes, and not to limit our horizons by the achievements of the past. I shall do so with certain objectives in mind and these are my objectives. To end the war in Vietnam,

(Applause)

to stop and put a halt to the rising tide of lawlessness in our cities,

(Applause)

to insure a meaningful job for every citizen willing to work,

(Applause)

and to guarantee a first class education for every child born in this land.

(Applause)

In other words, to provide a life of meaning and dignity and purpose for every American. And I shall do so with the humility born of the knowledge that no man can hope to advance the unfinished work of our society without the help of his God and the support of his people. I intend to work hard enough to merit that support, to earn that support, and I come here tonight in the great State of Texas to ask you to be in the vanguard of this

leadership for the new day that America needs and deserves.

(Applause)

Now, I have spoken to you from my heart and I have spoken to you as I see it or as the young friends say, I have told it like it is, said it like it is.

(Applause)

Now, let's hear from you. Question number 1..

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM STATEMENT AT

SAN JACINTO ROOM, HOUSTON, TEXAS

September 10, 1968

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, today President Johnson obviously --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Would each person identify himself?

QUESTION: Richard Dobin, News Director, KEXX Station.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Today President Johnson obviously contradicted what you said yesterday when you said if elected you would attempt to bring some troops home from Vietnam as early as late 1968 or in early 1969. The President said no one could ever tell.

Why did President Johnson deliberately contradict you and why hasn't President Johnson so far endorsed you either for the nomination or for the President?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The question was in effect that I had indicated that some troops might be able to be brought, might be able to be brought home from South Vietnam, American troops, in early 1969 or hopefully in late 1968. The gentleman says that the President today stated that no man could make that prediction. Is that right?

QUESTION: That is correct.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: And the second part of the question was why hasn't the President --

QUESTION: Endorsed you.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: -- endorsed me.

Well, first of all, will somebody please bring me the morning newspaper? Give me one of your morning newspapers in town here because one of the Marine divisions is on its way home.

(Applause) and shouts)

Give me your paper there. I had it up in my room. I was just showing my staff. They were a bunch of Doubting Thomases just like you fellows here.

(Laughter)

It is the Post.

MAYOR WELCH: Late Chronicle. It is in the afternoon Chronicle.

VOICE: They know it is in there.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: There is the statement, it is the headline in one of your newspapers, I regret in the haste to come here and some of you all have newspapers, around here, let's get it so we can take a look at it. I have got 20 staff men here. Will someone please run and get it?

(Laughter)

They have heard me speak enough. They don't have to hear me again.

VOICE: We have it coming.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you, sir. And there is the story that some of the Marines that have been sent to Vietnam, American Marines, are now to be returned.

VOICE: Right.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't know what the other statement is about. I said that I had hoped that this could happen. And my hope at least has been vindicated as a fact in the press. I always believe what I read in the papers.

(Laughter)

The second question was, why hasn't the President endorsed me. The President has not only endorsed me. He has embraced me.

(Laughter) and applause)

VOICE: We know that, but some don't know that.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't think there is a shadow of a doubt in the minds of anyone that the President of the United States would like very much to see the Vice President of the United States be elected President of the United States. He said that repeatedly.

(Applause)

I am waiting for a paper. I want it down. Be sure we get it.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, could you comment on the feasibility of the national presidential primary by '72 and if you favor such a program and comment on the conventions?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: As to what you think about the way they work in this country today.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I do believe that our convention system is in need of a very, very in depth study and analysis as to whether or not it really meets modern needs of what we call our modern politics. Senator Gaylord Nelson of the State of Wisconsin, has introduced legislation in the Congress for the establishment of a high level commission of both public and private members to examine into the political party convention system as to its adequacies and its inadequacies.

QUESTION: I am aware of that, sir.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I just -- this is the Houston Post. It is dated Tuesday, September 10. It says "Humphrey arrives tonight at 6:30". I am sorry we were a little late.

(Laughter)

"Marine Regiment Heads Home from Viet War. Withdrawal is first for the U.S." A UPI story. "The U.S. command announced Tuesday it was sending a Marine regiment back to the United States. Spokesmen said it was the first withdrawal of an American troop unit from the Vietnam War."

(Applause)

Rather an extended story. I think that it verifies what I had hoped. I didn't say it would happen. Who can predict what will happen? One can express his hopes and I had said earlier that I thought that there was the possibility that it could happen, that it might happen, that I had hoped that it would happen, and if this is a true story, and I gather that it would be or it wouldn't occupy such a prominent position in the press, I would have to say that we have some reason to be at least a little grateful for the return of some of our men from that part of the world.

Now, may I get back to your question, sir. The commission of Senator Nelson, I think, is it.

Secondly, I have long supported, and did so when the late Senator Estes Kefauver had introduced his resolution, at national presidential primary. I recognize that it has its inadequacies and its difficulties but on balance, I THINK IT HAS MORE TO OFFER TO IT THAN IT HAS LIMITATIONS. I do believe that the time now is at hand for a very careful re-evaluation and we re-study of the total convention process and as you know, our party in convention at Chicago over the din and over all of the commotion on the outside of the convention made some very forward strides in terms of modernizing the caucus machinery.

the conventian machinery, the machinery of the Democratic party. This is something that our fellow Republicans did not do.

(Applause)

It is very difficult for me to see on the lights. So, if you will just speak up and identify yourself.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, the lady, please.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, can you tell me what particularly you know about the poverty in the United States, particularly in Texas and the Rio Grande Valley.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I know primarily, my dear lady, what I have read, and I know primarily what I have been told by some of those who lived there. I do not claim to be an expert about the poverty in Texas. I can tell you a little bit about the poverty in Minnesota. I can tell you some -- I am speaking very frankly to you about the poverty in our great rural areas, I mean our great metropolitan areas, but I think it would be a reasonably factual statement to say there is not a state in thisland that does not have within it poor, the poor people.

I do not say that this is the result of any pre-meditated conspiracy on the part of any leadership. I think it is one of the unfortunate developments of human society. The poor have been with us since the beginning of organized society but I think that for the first time we have a chance to do something about at least alleviating some of the conditions of poverty.

QUESTION: Do you intend to do this?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, my dear lady. I have been in the forefront of that fight all of my public life. I have been one of those that has worked for programs --

(Applause)

-- I have been one of those that has worked for those programs, public and private, and I don't think they can all be done by government, public and private that would help alleviate these conditions.

QUESTION: Thank you.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Thank you, ma'am.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: A recent issue of Life magazine quotes you as saying that you could have lived with the recent Minority plank on Vietnam. Under what conditions would you have favored an unconditional retreat of troops in Vietnam?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, let me make it very clear about the platform. Many a man who has been a presidential candidate in the past, and I imagine some in the future, will find features in the platform that he doesn't particularly like, even though he accepts the nomination of his party. This has happened before and it will happen undoubtedly again.

I supported and still do support the Majority plank in the platform. I don't say that --

(Applause)

-- I don't say that it is a perfect plank but I think it represents a rather sensible point of view.

I thought that the Minority plank went too far when it calls

for unconditional cessation of the bombing.

(Applause)

I thought that went too far. But, I also noted that it did not call for unconditional immediate, and there was a certain amount of fuzzing of the words.

Now, let me again repeat to you that I said before the convention that I thought support the nominee of my party and if that nominee had been my colleague from Minnesota, Senator McCarthy, I would have gladly supported him.

(Applause)

If it had been my friend, Senator McGovern from South Dakota, who was my neighbor for better than ten years, I would have gladly supported him.

(Applause)

We disagreed on the rhetoric of the platform but I happen to believe that if either one of them had become President, that the realities of life, that the hard, cold realities of the international situation would have had a much more controlling influence upon their decisions than the printed word of a platform that was fought over in convention, and this is why I have said, sir, in my acceptance speech, that I would not feel bound by the policies of the past in confronting the realities of the future.

(Applause)

Let it be very clear that all three of us that I have mentioned, Senator McCarthy, Senator McGovern and myself, had one common objective, the attainment of a just and honorable peace in Vietnam. We had different approaches but I might add that the exaggeration of the differences was more than the desire of some people to accommodate the points of agreement.

None of us recommended unilateral withdrawal. None of us recommended that we should have a total military solution.

All of us recommended that there should be a negotiated political settlement. All of us felt that it would be desirable to have a cease fire. All of us said that we should have systematic withdrawal of American forces as the Army of South Vietnam was capable of taking up the defense of its own country.

All of us said there should be no permanent American bases in South Vietnam. All three of us said that there should be economic assistance for the rehabilitation of South Vietnam and North Vietnam. And all of

And all three of us pledged ourselves to the concept of free elections, one man, one vote, that all persons should participate in those elections and be eligible for office if they would accept the results of a peaceful election and would renounce violence as a means of obtaining political power.

Now, those are the points of agreement, and those -- some of those points were in the Minority plank as they were in the Majority plank. The difference in the two planks was one said unconditional cessation of the bombing and then went on to say, of course, we must protect our troops in the south. And the other one said that we should have cessation of the bombing when there was restraint and response but we must, we must, of course, protect our troops in the south.

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I cannot imagine any man being President of the United States that would take a precipitous action unless he thought it would lend itself to peace, and unless he thought at the same time that he was protecting the lives of American men that were committed to battle. I don't care what your platform says.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Are you saying, then, sir, that you were misquoted by Life magazine?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: No, I am not saying I was misquoted at all. I am simply saying what my position is and it is very clear. It has been stated about 300 times now.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes.

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, do you favor replacing the draft with a well paid, highly efficient voluntary army like Adlai Stevenson did?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: When the day comes when that will be adequate. In the meantime, I favor the lottery system or the random selection system rather than the present system.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, you have said that the post-Vietnam budget will contain implements for the rehabilitation of the ghetto. Do you think that public opinion will be for the return of this extra money to the private sector? Could you expound on this?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: One of the reasons I have been talking about it as I have -- your question is most appropriate -- is because we are going to have to build a public opinion for it to support just that, namely, in other words, that the savings that can come as a dividend of peace will be directed towards the great social needs of this nation.

I served in the Congress when the war in Korea was over and that was a very costly war. It took a larger percentage of our gross national product than this war. It took many lives. And what happened after the war was over? There were poor in this country, many poor, more than there are now. There were slums in this country, as filthy and as dirty as they are now. There were people who were illiterate in America, more than there are now. There were social problems in this country of unemployment greater than they are now. And what happened after the war was over? Not a bit of the money was dedicated to the needs of this nation. The savings from the war went into tax reductions and you had three recessions in eight years and no real development in this nation.

(Applause)

QUESTION: But, Mr. Humphrey, you also note that because of the fact that so many black people have been hired by private industries as extras for the war boom, wouldn't you say that this would tend to throw off more black people and create more unemployment and create more riots than if you continued the economy at the pace that it is going today, the war economy?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I wouldn't want --

QUESTION: And wouldn't this cause more riots and then more riots control funds would be needed?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I say that the economy has had 90 consecutive months of a growth rate between 4-1/2 per cent and 5.2

before any large involvement in Vietnam as well as after a considerable involvement in the Vietnam, and it is my view that if we can keep this economy going forward on a sensible base, with adequate physical policies and monetary policies, that we will have jobs.

I don't think there is any doubt at all but what we will have jobs.

I don't think there is any doubt at all but what we will have jobs. There are great unmet needs in this country, tremendous needs, and all we need to have are what I call these peace dividends, namely, the resources that we can save from when the war is over to be put into the public sector in our urban ghettos, in our highway programs, in our schools, in our hospitals, in our training programs, there is such tremendous needs.. We don't need to look forward to any rise in unemployment.

What we ought to look forward to is a great opportunity to start building this nation anew.

QUESTION: In other words, you would maintain the tax? You would maintain the --

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: I don't happen to be a citizen of the great State of Texas. I am a citizen of the great state of Georgia. My name is Clarence Hubert Snipes.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: How do you do?

QUESTION: I have only one question to direct to you, sir. No one could debate that Kennedy beat Nixon strictly, strictly from the TV debates. I would -- you have shown great sincerity in your voice and mannerisms tonight. I am tremendously impressed and I am not trying to flatter you.

I would like to see, and I am sure that this crowd and everyone in America would like to see you and Mr. Nixon go head on. Now, how about it?

(Applause and shouts)

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, my good friend, my good friend, this is a recommendation that I have made myself. I want you to know I am in shape.

(Laughter)

I am ready to go.

(Applause)

You know, since you have asked this question and been so kind in your remarks, I think you ought to recollect that in 1960 I gave Mr. Kennedy his spring training, you know.

(Laughter) and applause)

And I never had the slightest doubt as to how that election was going to come out because I knew that if I couldn't defeat Kennedy, I didn't think Mr. Nixon could and I feel the same way now.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, your opposition last week stated that he could bring an early end to the war. Do you think that anyone one candidate could bring an honorable end any sooner than any other candidate?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think that the greatest contribution that the candidates can make at this particular time is to make it very clear to the government in North Vietnam, to the regime in Hanoi, that it is in their interest to proceed with substantive negotiations and to seek a political settlement in Paris between now and January

20th which the Communists are not going to be -- which the Communists wouldn't get in legitimate processes of negotiation between now and January 20th.

In other words, they ought to cut out the killing and settle down to the negotiating, because I believe that the greatest service that Mr. Nixon and myself can perform for this country and for the cause of peace is to have it unmistakably clear that we are not going to play politics with Vietnam, that we are going to ask the people of North Vietnam and their government to recognize that partisan debate in America does not result in any weakening of our determination either on the battlefield or at the conference table.

(Applause)

I know of no one that wants peace any more than the President of the United States. No one that wants it any more.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, Mr. Humphrey --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: What do you think of the proposal made by the Secretary General of the United Nations that in South Vietnam the war be ended by neutralizing that territory and possibly some adjoining territory like Austria was neutralized in Europe?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I think it is a very sensible proposal.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, I would like to ask you a question about Vietnam, too.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: We have been talking about the kind of honorable settlement we are going to get but the question is basically, it goes back to what right do we have in the first place to send American troops into a civil war in a foreign country on behalf of a militant --

(Boo, boo)

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

QUESTION: On behalf --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Gentlemen, gentlemen, please proceed,

sir.

QUESTION: On behalf of a military dictator that opposes Trong Din Sui, that cannot hold elections without disqualifying its best known opponent, whose vice president is an avowed admirer of Adolf Hitler, and which seems incapable or unwilling of carrying out the basic social and economic reforms that are necessary to win the support of its people?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir. Are you through, sir?

QUESTION: Yes, sir.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: May I just reflect for a moment on your rather extended question. First of all, first of all, South Vietnam has a treaty arrangement with the United States. We are a member of SEATO. We have what we call protocol arrangements which are treaty arrangements with South Vietnam.

Secondly, it is not a civil war. There are aspects of civil war, but the troops from North Vietnam are not indigenous to South Vietnam and they are not a part of a civil war. It is open aggression, fully recognized. For a long time North Vietnam denied it even had any troops in South Vietnam and one of the achievements of the conference at Paris is at long last they have admitted that they have troops in North Vietnam. Of course, it was ridiculous for them not to admit it.

I think we have some idea of the quality of the Government of North Vietnam when you find that the only communist nation outside of Eastern Europe that supported the Soviet Union's naked aggression in Czechoslovakia was the Government of North Vietnam. I think that gives you some indication of what is going on.

QUESTION: Sir, may I --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Just a minute. You asked the question.

QUESTION: Can I respond?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The Government of South Vietnam is an elected government. To be sure, not everybody participated but the Government of the United States didn't have full participation in its first election, either. The Capital of our country was moved 11 times. The Constitution of the United States was never written by elected officials. They were all appointed. I think it was a good job, don't misunderstand me.

(Applause)

Don't misunderstand me.

What is more, the Constitution of the United States permitted nobody to observe its activities. The doors were locked. And even Benjamin Franklin had two guards attached to him in case he had an extra drink of wine and became a little gregarious and a little talkative.

A 100 members were invited to our Constitutional Convention. 55 stayed. I said invited. None were elected. 55 came. 39 stayed. 38 signed. And it took them two years to get the Constitution and get it ratified.

Now, the Constituent Assembly of Vietnam with all of its limitations, and it has plenty, was an elected constituent assembly and I think it is maybe good to once again review it.

I remember when it was said they will never -- first of all, they said they will never have an election. Well, they had one. They destroyed that hope of someone. They said the Constituent Assembly would never complete its work, but it did.

The next one was that President Shu Thieu, who was the head of the Directors would never accept the Constitution, but he did.

And, then, the next one was that the Assembly would never meet. I mean that the elections for the National Assembly would never take place but they did and we sent observers from this country, governors, churchmen, Archbishop Lucey, one right from this state, to observe that election, and even the most severe critic came back and said as elections come and go, and we have had all kinds in the United States, now, we are not without sin ourselves.

(Laughter)

as elections come and go, as elections come and go, it was a pretty fair election, and over 80 per cent of the electorate voted, despite the efforts of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese to terrorize the population, despite the fact that candidates for public office were killed, despite the fact that election officials were kidnapped. Nevertheless, there was an election, and a President and Vice President were elected and you say, but he didn't get a majority vote, well, 11 Presidents of the U.S. never got a majority vote, either. Some of them had rather slim pluralities. And, even in our time, the late John Kennedy did not get a majority vote. He had less than 50 per cent. John Adams had considerably less, and so

did others.

All I am saying is that if you want to compare elections, the one in South Vietnam is a 1000 per cent better than any they have had in North Vietnam, now, if you want to make comparisons.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President, --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I don't want to have it understood that I think it was too good. I think it was better, may I say, than the area had had before, and the present government of South Vietnam has a much broader base. The new Prime Minister is a man known for integrity, for courage, and for honesty. His name is Huong, and he is a good man. Over 20 province chiefs have been removed for corruption. 66 district chiefs have been removed for corruption. Over 200 officers of the military have been summarily court martialled for corruption.

Everything that happens in South Vietnam is before the public. I think we get very little information out of North Vietnam. I think, my fellow Americans, that this little country has 800,000 men under arms, which would be the equivalent of 16 million Americans based on population, that has been at war for almost 20 years, deserves better than the constant harassment and condemnation of an ally that has put 25,000 of our best sons dead in that country in that war.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Erickson of the University of Houston. I listened to McCarthy in Chicago, in Grant Park and I listened to Nixon last week in Herman Park and I have listened to you here tonight and I will say one thing that I think you have in common to McCarthy contrary to playing with words, you do like McCarthy, tell it straight and as far as I can see you have been telling the truth. That is a personal opinion.

(Applause)

My question is this, McCarthy indicated in the park that he would remain within the system but he was not going to work for either of the two candidates. Now, a lot of us are wondering what we are going to do for these four years, that we were for McCarthy before, but since McCarthy has removed himself, I would like to ask you, Mr. Vice President, why we should work for you.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Because I think I offer you the best alternative out of what you have available.

(Applause and shouts)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: On behalf of the University of Houston, young democrats, the college young Democrats, the Harris County Young Democrats, the Pasadena Young Democrats and all of the young Democrats in this area, we come here tonight with a question that is in our mind representing not the hippies or the yippies on our campuses but rather the people who believe in America, the young people, that is, who still feel that they don't have an active voice, who still feel they need an active voice, and deserves an active voice, and we have to contend with these people.

Mr. Vice President, I ask you, how are you going to help us tell them that they do have an active voice in your campaign by organizing our

Young Democrats and working within the political system?

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: The average age of the campaign committee that worked for me prior to the convention, of all those that were working in my behalf in our headquarters, was 26. I thought we had a lot of young people. We didn't get much attention of having young people but we had a lot of young people and we had thousands of young people with us at Chicago,

just as exactly as my friend, Senator McCarthy and Senator McGovern had them, and we had them here and we had them all across this country. Because they happened to be supporting my candidacy and they frequently don't carry certain kinds of signs, and I don't object to signs, as a matter of fact, I have carried them and a lot of them in my time, I am a very tolerant man about that, but because they do not engage in that, they seldom get that much attention.

Now, what is it that I can do that will deserve the attention and the help of the young people, and may I say that I want to deserve it. As I told many a delegation, I never expected anybody's support. I wanted to earn it. My political life has been characterized by an association with youth all of my life, the men who work in my office as Vice President are young men. I have been one of those that helped sponsor the student intern program in that government, to bring young people into Washington, D.C.

I have been Chairman of the President's Youth Opportunity Council. I have helped through that program with little or no funds, to secure a million four hundred thousand jobs for needy young men and women across this country. I think that means something to young people.

I have been a teacher at a great university as well as a student. And, my students seem to find in that teacher an understanding mind and a sympathetic spirit. I want, if I am permitted to be President, and during the time that I seek this office, to have the counsel of young people. I want to listen to them. I do not brush their ideas aside. I am not at all sure that those of us who are in positions of responsibilities are right. We have to judge on the basis of what information we have but we must constantly seek new information to improve our judgment.

I want the idealism of young people in the political process. I want them in the caucuses of our party. I want young people to be entrusted with political leadership in our party. And it doesn't particularly disturb me that there may be what we call sort of a rebel fashion in a party that is very young because I have noted over the years that once they gain power, they get to acting somewhat like the rest of us.

(Laughter and applause)

Very much so.

I have not lost my sense of idealism, not one bit. I have called upon the young in this nation to help us in what I consider to be the great problems that confront us, to help us change the attitude of this country about people, to help us break down racism in this country, to help us help the deprived in this country. I have gone from college campus to college campus as a Vice President, over 70 of them, and 30 junior colleges and technical institutes, calling upon young people to take

this enthusiasm that is theirs and go on out and help some people. The politics of service, volunteer their time to a mental retardation institute. Volunteer their time to handicapped children. Volunteer their time to tutoring in the ghetto. Volunteer their time for recreation play grounds attendance. Volunteer their lives to help young people across this country and older people.

I am the author of the Peace Corps when Mr. Nixon called it a fanciful idea, friends, and a scheme for draft dodgers. I am the author may I say, of the program called the Job Center. I fought for those things. My whole life has been and is characterized by an association with the needs of the young and I don't intend to give it up and if I am President of the United States, as I said earlier, young men and women in America will find not only a friend in the White House, they will find a companion, they will find a partner and somebody that they can work with and somebody they can be with.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. President, please just one.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I have just about got to go home to bed here pretty --

QUESTION: Just one question.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I can't turn you down.

QUESTION: I know you can't. I am sorry I am a little over the average age of your --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: You look fine to me. Sorry, Kuroki.

(Laughter)

5 QUESTION: I want to tell you how very wonderful you look to us tonight. You know, from all the reports we have had and the stories we have had, I didn't know whether I was going to come here and see a man with a hawk face or a devil's horns or what you were going to be, but you look just like the fine wonderful man I met in 1932 and for now I hope to be able to work this year.

Now, my question is, will you please ask the people who have been given slips of registration for work in the party in your campaign to give them to any lady in the audience that has a red, white and blue badge on.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Well, I sure will. Bless your heart.

(Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Vice President --

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very, very much. There comes a time even when the best of good times must come to an end. And you have given me a wonderful evening. I hope you have enjoyed it.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MAYOR WALSH: We did not intend for him to discuss us because we wanted to present the lovely lady, Mrs. Humphrey.

(Applause)



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