

REMARKS OF
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
TO GROUP OF LABOR LEADERS

- - -

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

September 13, 1968

WARD & PAUL
OFFICIAL REPORTERS
25 K STREET, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

(202) 628-4266

Taylor
mbh/

Phone (Area 202) 628-4266

REMARKS OF
VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT H. HUMPHREY
TO GROUP OF LABOR LEADERS

Friday, September 13, 1968

Fort Duquesne Room
William Penn Hotel
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
11:35 p.m.

You have waited a long time but it is a little bit late to get what you were asking me to give them. I will save that for an afternoon meeting.

First, I want to thank my friend Walter, Walter Burke, and I want to thank Bill Title for greeting me here and all of the members of the labor movement of this great county, Allegheny County, particularly the City of Pittsburgh.

We have some good candidates behind us here. And I like to have them behind me, working with me all the time, none other than your friend and my friend and one that has really stood with you all the way, Senator Joseph Clark, and I know you are going to give Joe the kind of help which he richly deserves.

(Applause)

You have a remarkable man that has, I think, a tremendous future in this state and is on the ballot again and that is Bob Casey. Bob, are you here?

(Applause)

And, we have our friend, Judge Circone right here.

(Applause)

And you all know Grace Leen(?), I know. Gracie, come right up here.

(Applause)

I mention him because I am proud of him and I am proud to be on the ticket with him.

I want to get right down to cases. I am talking to the people that are going to help decide this election and you may very well be decisive. You are the kind of people that can take it as the kids say. You can say it like it is, take it like it is.

We are in difficulty in this election unless we buckle down and do something about it. I am not going to try to play games with anybody. If we do not step up our efforts to take the message, the message of social progress and of

WARD & PAUL

25 K Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002

1 liberal programs, and we can go and spend the time tonight and
2 go over them, I just ask you to take a look at the platform we
3 adopted in convention. Most people stopped at Article 1 and
4 never got through the rest of it but take a look at it. It is
5 a charter for social progress of this country. And if we do
6 not get down to business in the rank and file of the union
7 membership, if we don't get on out into the precincts where the
8 people live, suburbs, and inner city and rural areas, this
9 election can go by default because we didn't do enough to win
10 it, and I don't think you want Richard Nixon to have this election
11 because we didn't do our job.

12 (Applause)

13 And he is putting up a rough fight and a hard fight.
14 I told you that before I ever got this nomination. I never
15 thought it would be easy. And there is a third party candidate
16 and he has an impact in the union movement. And all I am asking
17 every union officer, every trade union person, every industrial
18 worker, every person that has a leadership responsibility, I
19 ask you to judge these three candidates on the basis of their
20 record and I want you to examine that record.

21 I want you to take a look at mine. I want you to
22 take a look at the Republican nominee's. I want you to take a
23 look at the third party nominee. I want you to see who was
24 for right-to-work laws. I want you to see who is for the Federal
25 Aid to Education. I want you to see who was against it. I
26 want you to see where we have stood.

27 Now, my friends, unless we do this and get that
28 message out to your cousins, your nephews, your aunts, your
29 uncles, your sisters, your brothers, your mother, your father,
30 your relatives, unless you do that you are going to wake up on
31 the 6th day of November and you are going to have a man elected
32 that started his political career downgrading Franklin Roosevelt,
33 that spent his early days in the Congress of the United States
34 attacking Harry Truman, that spent his time in the middle fifties
35 demeaning Adlai Stevenson, that spent his time in 1960 fighting
36 John Kennedy, and has spent his time the last four years
37 attacking the Democratic Administration that is now in power.

38 Now, if you want that, we can get it by inactivity.
39 But, we have the tools and the means and we can win it honorably.
40 We will win it on the basis of the record.

41 I know the American people want this country to move
42 ahead. I know the American people want their children educated.
43 Higher education shouldn't be just the privilege of the rich or
44 the fortunate. It ought to belong to every young man and woman
45 that wants a college education. And I know that we can help
46 provide a better living environment in this country.

47 Listen, if we can put a man on the moon as I have told
48 you a hundred and one times, and spend the billions of dollars
49 that we do in doing that, we can help put a man on his feet right

1 here on earth, one of our fellow citizens. There is no reason
2 we can't do that.

(Applause)

3 VOICES: We want Hubert. We want Hubert. We want
4 Hubert. We want Humphrey.

5 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I want you to take a look
6 at the difference. I said to another group here in the other
7 room that one of the candidates said, Mr. Wallace said there
8 isn't a dime's worth of difference between Mr. Nixon and Mr.
9 Humphrey. Well, I want to tell you, my friends, there is
10 \$175 billion worth of difference.

(Applause)

11 The Republican nominee said that if you have this man,
12 Mr. Humphrey, you will get four more years of the same. I
13 guess he means that if you are Vice President, whenever you are
14 Vice President, you get what you had during the Vice Presidency.

15 Well, I want to remind the workers in this room you
16 had three recessions in eight years. It cost you \$175 billion
17 of lost income. Pittsburgh had unemployment -- you know, you
18 were around here -- unemployment compensation, trying to find
19 jobs. The revenues of this city were down, and of this state,
20 and there were 101 things that went wrong.

21 All I am saying to you is that if you want that, you
22 can get it again.

23 Mr. Nixon is an intelligent man. He would like to
24 have you believe that he monopolizes the field of law and
25 order and respect for the law.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, let me say in the presence
of my friends from the labor movement, I was elected Mayor of
my city, the City of Minneapolis, with the support of organized
labor and I gave the City of Minneapolis the best law enforce-
ment program that city ever had and it is a matter of public
record, and when Mr. Nixon talks to me about being, he says --
he says the Vice President is naive about law and order.

Well, now, I want to tell you something. I doubt
that he has even got one of those Cracker Jack badges that you
get for law and order.

(Laughter and applause)

Sometimes when you go through -- sometimes when you
go through town and you are a dignitary they come up and make
you an honorary sheriff. That doesn't make you a man of law
and order. That doesn't make you a law man. It just means you
have got another trinket. They are nice to have. I have got
a whole lot of them myself. I enjoy them.

But, I want to tell you the problem of law and order
is essentially the problem of local government and state
government and backed up with what assistance the Federal
Government can give and this government of ours and Administration
has passed the Safe Street bill, the law and order bill, and we

1 passed it with very little help from some people we could have
2 used some help from.

3 There is no monopoly upon wanting a safe community.
4 I don't know a single mayor or governor, Republican or
5 Democrat, that doesn't want to see the law enforced. But if
6 Mr. Nixon wants to play games with law and order, then let me
7 remind him in the states that have Republican governors there
8 is more lawlessness than in the states that have Democratic
9 governors.

10 (Applause)

11 I want to make it crystal clear I don't think that is
12 the Republican governors fault at all. But if you want to play
13 games we can play them, too.

14 I don't intend to -- and I want to make it very
15 clear, crystal clear to you, that I do not hold a Republican
16 governor accountable for crime that takes place in his
17 area. I know that the problem of crime and violence and law-
18 lessness is a serious problem and I know that there are two ways
19 to do something about it. One is to mobilize the law enforce-
20 ment instrumentalities of this country in cooperation, federal,
21 state and local, to improve the quality of our police, to pay
22 them, and pay them well. They are the most underpaid of public
23 servants. To give them training, to back them up, and to
24 teach them and train them not only in law enforcement
25 techniques but in community relations and race relations and
26 teach them their rights as well as the rights of the citizen.

27 That is one way. And I am for it and I did it. I
28 didn't write a pamphlet about it or a speech. I performed it.
29 And it is a matter of record, and every citizen in my state
30 knows it.

31 Now, what is the other way? It just so happens, my
32 dear friends, that the greatest amount of crime is found in the
33 areas of the poor. I don't say that poverty makes crime. I
34 simply say that poverty is an environment in which criminal
35 activity regrettably finds a very fertile soil and that is a
36 fact.

37 Mr. Nixon says we ought to double our convictions.
38 We ought to have strict law enforcement. It may mean more
39 than double, I don't know. But, I know that America is not
40 going to be a better country just because you build a new jail.
41 You may need a new jail and you may need a new penitentiary
42 and you may need to fill it up. But I hope that when we fill
43 it up we try also to have some rehabilitation of those who get
44 there.

45 Four out of every five that go to jail are repeaters
46 which tells us that we haven't done very well in that area.

47 But, what America needs is not merely civil order and
48 that is important, to have civil order. That is peace in our
49 communities. But it needs also civil justice. Justice for you

1 and justice for everybody else.

(Applause)

2 I do not want one person to go out of here misunder-
3 standing me for a minute. If I am President of the United
4 States and violence infects this country, I will use all the
5 power at my command to suppress it. I want you to know it right
6 now.

(Applause)

7 No monkey business. I have done it before and I can do it
8 again.

9 But I did not have my city known for the fact that
10 it only had a police department, even though I believe in
11 honoring the work of those frontline fighters for safety and
12 security in our communities. I believe that every city ought
13 to have an honor day for its police department. I really believe
14 that. Give these fellows support.

(Applause)

15 But, I wanted my city known for good labor management
16 relations. I wanted it known for jobs. I wanted it known for
17 education. I wanted it known for parks. I wanted it known for
18 housing. I wanted it known for slum clearance. I wanted it known
19 that we had families that lived a decent life and had a
20 chance, and when Mr. Nixon parades around telling me that all
21 Humphrey wants to do is double the poverty program, let me tell
22 you that every time a family comes off from poverty, this is a
23 better America and I know it and so do you.

(Applause)

24 And the way we fight this poverty program is through
25 the union movement where they get a decent wage, too. That
helps fight the poverty problem. And we win this war on poverty
with new business and new investment. We win it with private
enterprise and we win it with government. No one has a monopoly
on this. But, I am not going to let this nation go by in this
election without making a choice.

We are not electing a sheriff to put in the White
House. We are electing a President of all of these people of
the United States.

(Applause)

And, we need a President that is firm and compassionate. We
need a President that understands the law and understands human
nature. And we need a President that cares for the people.
Cares for the people.

(Applause)

I will leave with this. Please go on out and go to
work.

VOICES: We will.

VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I know you will. Bless your
hearts. Let me tell you, if we don't something is going to
happen in this country that you don't want to have happen.

1 I don't think that you want to turn your backs upon the memory
of the men that I have mentioned.

2 I want to tell you I have been reading about the new
3 Nixon. Some people tell me about the same old guy. The one you
have got to be concerned with is the real one.

4 VOICES: You'd better believe it.

5 VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY: I am not talking about Mr.
Nixon as a person. I am talking about his policies. I have
6 never indulged in politics of trying to tear down a man on
his character. He is a good man. He is a decent man. I am
not worrying about that.

7 I am talking about his policies and all I am telling
you, my friends, is that it is up to you as well as it is up
to me.

8 I have people say, well, Mr. Vice President, go to
it, give it to him, you know, and I say I am going to do it
9 until I drop if I have to.

10 But, this is your country, too. And this is your
family and what happens in the White House is going to affect
11 you as well as me and it is going to affect the world as well
as Allegheny County and you better make up your minds tonight
12 that you have got the fight of your life on your hands. You
had better make up your minds that you are going to fight for the
13 greatest union that this world has ever known, the Federal
Union, and you had better work for it.

(Applause)

14 That is all I have got to tell you. I just want
you to get out of here now and bestir yourselves. Don't depend
15 just on everybody is going to do it. We are going to do it
together. I have been together with you all my public life
16 and we are going to stick together and let's go on out now
and finish this job.

(Applause)

17 Thank you.

18 # # #
19
20
21
22
23
24
25



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org