

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
VOTER REGISTRATION RALLY

Providence, Rhode Island

October 21, 1971

Young people all across this nation will be gathering this year for voter registration rallies as you are doing today.

On California beaches, in student unions, on the streets of college towns, in factories and in ghettos, new voters are taking the first step toward the voting booth.

But I think we should look to the day when registration rallies are no longer necessary -- no longer necessary because this nation's registration and voter turnout figures will approach the high percentages now experienced by other western democracies.

To achieve these high percentages, I believe we should enact a national voter registration system.

I am not talking about a visionary scheme or a system that is years away.

In the next few weeks a national voter registration bill will be reported out of committee and be ready for consideration by the Senate. By providing a convenient registration system by mail, this bill will remove registration as a barrier to voting. It will apply to federal elections and will limit residency to only 30 days. It will also contain provisions allowing states to adopt this federal system.

I was pleased to be one of the prime initiators and sponsors of this new concept.

I predict that the Senate will pass a national voter registration bill during this session of Congress despite opposition from some who believe such legislation is not needed.

I believe a system of national voter registration is needed now because 37 million Americans did not register to vote in 1968.

It is needed now to register 11.5 million new voters made eligible by the 26th Amendment.

It is needed now to register the 3.5 million Americans who turn 18 every year.

It is needed now to prevent race, poverty, old age, illness, fear, ignorance and unfair state laws from obstructing the voting booth for millions of Americans of all ages.

And it is needed now to prevent America from becoming a nation of government by the minority for the majority.

But despite any system to facilitate registration, registration is only the first step in political participation.

The next steps are organizing and then voting.

And, here, too, students must organize to assert their rights. In some college communities students are denied the right to establish residence and vote as other citizens moving into the community are allowed to do.

Many states have laws which say that no persons shall gain or lose residence by virtue of being a student. I oppose these laws because as far as voting is concerned, a student should not be treated differently from anyone else.

A student should have the right to establish a voting residence in his college community so long as he meets the legal definitions of residence applied to other members of the same community whether they are doctors, lawyers, or plumbers. I believe that a man or woman's status as a student is irrelevant under the Constitution for the purpose of determining residence to vote.

I am pleased to see that a number of states -- including the state of Rhode Island -- have recently moved to permit students to vote in their respective college communities, and I hope that more will follow.

Unfortunately, Attorney General Mitchell refused last month to have the Justice Department assume a role in shaping state residency laws as they apply to new voters. He also refused to have his department issue guidelines to the states on the 26th Amendment because he felt this would interfere with the legislative role of Congress.

I hope the Attorney General's actions do not mean that the Nixon Administration will not support an active federal role in the new system of voter registration.

Newspapers and magazines are filled today with stories about the potential power of 25 million new voters by 1972.

And, what is happening in Rhode Island is occurring all across this nation. In 1972, there will be 135,000 new voters in Rhode Island, or 11,000 more than the plurality I received in the 1968 Presidential election.

In all but one state, the number of new voters surpasses the plurality won by either candidate for President in 1968.

I believe the 25 million new voters in 1972 will provide the margin of victory. I also believe that despite the potential power of young voters, politicians at all levels of government today seriously underrate the deep-rooted sense of political frustration and powerlessness that will drive millions of young voters to the polls for the first time next year.

Politicians expect that you will give your minds, your hands, and your legs to a campaign. But many doubt that you'll actually vote.

I think they are dead wrong.

If I were 18 and saw a nation still at war in Southeast Asia, I would vote.

If I were 18 and saw white teenage unemployment at 13 percent and black teenage unemployment close to 35 percent, I would vote.

If I were 18 and saw millions of needy school children being cut out of a free school lunch program, I would vote.

If I were 18 and saw my government responding to the crisis of the moment at home and abroad, but lacked even the feeblest plans for next year or the next decade in education, in health care, in housing, I would vote.

And if I were 18 and had heard so many government promises, but seen so few results, I would vote.

All of you here today must register and vote if this nation is to begin to respond to the great problems of today and the future.

Not only are politicians questioning the intensity of the commitment of young Americans to effect change through the power of the ballot, but many are taking the youth vote for granted.

Both political parties are guilty of this.

The votes of the young will not go to one party or to one man unless that party and that man develop realistic programs and goals that respond to the legitimate needs of young Americans -- the legitimate needs of the nation's future.

You can hasten that response.

As young Americans enter the political process in force, political leaders at all levels of government must respond to their needs.

I hope that this registration rally today and the many that will be taking place elsewhere will symbolize a new era of responsibility and a national commitment to change not only on the part of the voters, but of those who are chosen to lead.

We can change what needs changing in this nation.

It will require leadership. And it will require pressure to create and then guide that leadership.

And in that process I am confident that young Americans will be heard -- and they will be heeded.

Gov Scott (Lead)
 Mayor Doolley
Bernard Mackay
 Father Duffey

REMARKS BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

Joe Duffey

VOTER REGISTRATION RALLY -- PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 21, 1971

repres
 Jim Aukerman
 one of youngest

h YOUNG PEOPLE ALL ACROSS THIS NATION WILL BE GATHERING THIS
 YEAR FOR VOTER REGISTRATION RALLIES AS YOU ARE DOING TODAY.

h ON CALIFORNIA BEACHES, IN STUDENT UNIONS, ON THE
 STREETS OF COLLEGE TOWNS, IN FACTORIES AND IN GHETTOES, NEW
 VOTERS ARE TAKING THE FIRST STEP TOWARD THE VOTING BOOTH. !

h BUT I THINK WE SHOULD LOOK TO THE DAY WHEN REGISTRATION
 RALLIES ARE NO LONGER NECESSARY -- NO LONGER NECESSARY BECAUSE
 THIS NATION'S REGISTRATION AND VOTER TURNOUT FIGURES WILL APPROACH
THE HIGH PERCENTAGES NOW EXPERIENCED BY OTHER WESTERN DEMOCRACIES.

TO ACHIEVE THESE HIGH PERCENTAGES, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD
 ENACT A NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEM.

*Voter Regnt
System*

h I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT A VISIONARY SCHEME OR A SYSTEM
THAT IS YEARS AWAY.

The Same Government that can find you
to take you, can find you to register you!

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L IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS A NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION BILL
~~SENATE~~ ~~WILL BE READY FOR CONSIDERATION~~

BY THE SENATE, BY PROVIDING A CONVENIENT REGISTRATION SYSTEM

BY MAIL, THIS BILL WILL REMOVE REGISTRATION AS A BARRIER TO

VOTING, IT WILL APPLY TO FEDERAL ELECTIONS AND WILL LIMIT

RESIDENCY TO ONLY 30 DAYS. IT WILL ALSO CONTAIN PROVISIONS

ALLOWING STATES TO ADOPT THIS FEDERAL SYSTEM,

L I WAS PLEASED TO BE ONE OF THE PRIME INITIATORS AND
SPONSORS OF THIS NEW CONCEPT.

and I PREDICT THAT THE ~~SENATE~~ ^{Congress} WILL PASS A NATIONAL VOTER
REGISTRATION BILL DURING THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS DESPITE
OPPOSITION FROM SOME WHO BELIEVE SUCH LEGISLATION IS NOT
NEEDED.

L ~~THE~~ a SYSTEM OF NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION IS

NEEDED NOW BECAUSE 37 MILLION AMERICANS DID NOT REGISTER TO

VOTE IN 1968 and over 30 million did not
Register in 1960

L IT IS NEEDED NOW TO REGISTER 11.5 MILLION NEW VOTERS

MADE ELIGIBLE BY THE 26TH AMENDMENT, and the 25 1/2 million

L IT IS NEEDED NOW TO REGISTER THE 3.5 MILLION AMERICANS

WHO TURN 18 EVERY YEAR!

L IT IS NEEDED NOW TO PREVENT RACE, POVERTY, OLD AGE,

ILLNESS, FEAR, IGNORANCE AND UNFAIR STATE LAWS FROM OBSTRUCTING

THE VOTING BOOTH FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS OF ALL AGES.

L AND IT IS NEEDED NOW TO PREVENT AMERICA FROM BECOMING

A NATION OF GOVERNMENT BY THE MINORITY FOR THE MAJORITY!

(Youth Vote Project of the U.S. Youth Council) Set it

A recent study - young people age 21-24
with some college education voted in
1968 at about the same rate as their
elders. 74% - but only $\frac{1}{3}$ of
the eligible voters in this same age
bracket who had no college educa-
tion voted - 32.9%.

of Nations Youth Popul.

College student in 4 year colleges
only 4 million out of 11 million

} between 18-21 - 7 million

} are at work in factories, shops or offices,
or in hi school - Voc school, Housework
armed forces, or looking for jobs

Register - Hi-Schools - at school -
or Registration Day - Registration at school
or by mail - legal
Students to office

↳ BUT DESPITE ANY SYSTEM TO FACILITATE REGISTRATION,

REGISTRATION IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION.

THE NEXT STEPS ARE ORGANIZING AND THEN VOTING.

! Organize
help the
non-college

↳ AND, HERE, TOO, STUDENTS MUST ORGANIZE TO ASSERT THEIR

RIGHTS ↳ IN SOME COLLEGE COMMUNITIES STUDENTS ARE DENIED THE

RIGHT TO ESTABLISH RESIDENCE AND VOTE AS OTHER CITIZENS MOVING

INTO THE COMMUNITY ARE ALLOWED TO DO

↳ ~~MANY STATES HAVE LAWS WHICH SAY THAT NO PERSONS SHALL~~
~~GAIN OR LOSE RESIDENCE BY VIRTUE OF BEING A STUDENT, I OPPOSE~~
~~THESE LAWS BECAUSE AS FAR AS VOTING IS CONCERNED, A STUDENT SHOULD~~
~~NOT BE TREATED DIFFERENTLY FROM ANYONE ELSE.~~

The "invisible youth - in work force
+ have between 18-25 in business-industry
10 million of them

L A STUDENT SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO ESTABLISH A VOTING
RESIDENCE IN HIS COLLEGE COMMUNITY SO LONG AS HE MEETS THE
LEGAL DEFINITIONS OF RESIDENCE APPLIED TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE
SAME COMMUNITY WHETHER THEY ARE DOCTORS, LAWYERS, OR PLUMBERS.

L I ~~WISH THAT~~ A MAN OR WOMAN'S STATUS AS A STUDENT IS
IRRELEVANT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF
DETERMINING RESIDENCE TO VOTE.

L I ~~WISH THAT~~ A NUMBER OF STATES -- INCLUDING
~~THE STATE OF~~ RHODE ISLAND -- HAVE RECENTLY MOVED TO PERMIT
STUDENTS TO VOTE IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COLLEGE COMMUNITIES, AND
I HOPE THAT MORE WILL FOLLOW.

L UNFORTUNATELY, ATTORNEY GENERAL MITCHELL REFUSED LAST MONTH TO HAVE THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ASSUME A ROLE IN SHAPING STATE RESIDENCY LAWS AS THEY APPLY TO NEW VOTERS. HE ALSO REFUSED TO HAVE HIS DEPARTMENT ISSUE GUIDELINES TO THE STATES ON THE 26TH AMENDMENT BECAUSE HE FELT THIS WOULD INTERFERE WITH THE LEGISLATIVE ROLE OF CONGRESS.

L I HOPE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ACTIONS DO NOT MEAN THAT THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION WILL NOT SUPPORT AN ACTIVE FEDERAL ROLE IN THE NEW SYSTEM OF VOTER REGISTRATION.

L NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES ARE FILLED TODAY WITH STORIES ABOUT THE POTENTIAL POWER OF 25 MILLION NEW VOTERS BY 1972.

-7-

L AND, WHAT IS HAPPENING IN RHODE ISLAND IS OCCURRING ALL
 ACROSS THIS NATION. I IN 1972, THERE WILL BE 135,000 NEW ^{Potential} VOTERS
 IN RHODE ISLAND, OR 11,000 MORE THAN THE PLURALITY I RECEIVED *here*
IN THE 1968 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

L IN ALL BUT ONE STATE, THE NUMBER OF NEW VOTERS SURPASSES
 THE PLURALITY WON BY EITHER CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT IN 1968.

L ~~I~~ THE 25 MILLION NEW VOTERS IN 1972 WILL PROVIDE
THE MARGIN OF VICTORY. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT DESPITE THE
 POTENTIAL POWER OF YOUNG VOTERS, POLITICIANS AT ALL LEVELS OF
 GOVERNMENT TODAY SERIOUSLY UNDERRATE THE DEEP-ROOTED SENSE OF
POLITICAL FRUSTRATION AND POWERLESSNESS THAT WILL DRIVE
 MILLIONS OF YOUNG VOTERS TO THE POLLS FOR THE FIRST TIME NEXT
 YEAR.

Some POLITICIANS EXPECT THAT YOU WILL GIVE YOUR MINDS, YOUR
HANDS, AND YOUR LEGS TO A CAMPAIGN, BUT MANY DOUBT THAT YOU'LL
 ACTUALLY VOTE.

I THINK THEY ARE DEAD WRONG.

↳ IF I WERE 18 AND SAW A NATION STILL AT WAR IN SOUTHEAST
 ASIA, I WOULD VOTE.

↳ IF I WERE 18 AND SAW WHITE TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT AT 13
 PERCENT AND BLACK TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT CLOSE TO 35 PERCENT,

I WOULD VOTE.

↳ IF I WERE 18 AND SAW MILLIONS OF NEEDY SCHOOL CHILDREN
 BEING CUT OUT OF A FREE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM, I WOULD VOTE.

If I were 18, and ~~was~~ knew that over 5 million
 of my fellow citizens were unemployed
 through no fault of their own, I would vote.

If I were 18, and believed that America must do better in Healthcare, in Education, in protection of the environment, in combating crime, in cleaning up providing housing, I would vote

L IF I WERE 18 AND SAW MY GOVERNMENT RESPONDING TO THE

CRISIS OF THE MOMENT AT HOME AND ABROAD, BUT LACKED EVEN THE

FEEBLEST PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR OR THE NEXT DECADE IN EDUCATION,

IN HEALTH CARE, IN HOUSING, I WOULD VOTE!

Yes,

IF I WERE 18 AND HAD HEARD SO MANY GOVERNMENT PROMISES,

BUT SEEN SO FEW RESULTS, I WOULD VOTE!

L ALL OF YOU HERE TODAY MUST REGISTER AND VOTE IF THIS

NATION IS TO BEGIN TO RESPOND TO THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF TODAY

AND THE FUTURE.

~~NOT ONLY ARE POLITICIANS QUESTIONING THE INTENSITY OF THE COMMITMENT OF YOUNG AMERICANS TO EFFECT CHANGE THROUGH THE POWER OF THE BALLOT, BUT MANY ARE TAKING THE YOUTH VOTE FOR GRANTED.~~

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~~not~~ The Right to Vote - bring with it
the Responsibility to Vote - to
participate - to know the issues -
the candidates

~~BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES ARE GUILTY OF THIS.~~

L THE VOTES OF THE YOUNG ^{should} ~~WILL~~ NOT GO TO ONE PARTY OR TO

ONE MAN UNLESS THAT PARTY AND THAT MAN DEVELOP REALISTIC

PROGRAMS AND GOALS THAT RESPOND TO THE LEGITIMATE NEEDS OF

YOUNG AMERICANS -- THE LEGITIMATE NEEDS OF THE NATION'S FUTURE.

L YOU CAN HASTEN THAT RESPONSE.

AS YOUNG AMERICANS ENTER THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN FORCE,

POLITICAL LEADERS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT MUST RESPOND

TO THEIR NEEDS.

The future is now -
what you do or do not do now,
determines what will happen
or will not happen tomorrow.

-11-

I HOPE THAT THIS REGISTRATION RALLY TODAY AND THE MANY
THAT WILL BE TAKING PLACE ELSEWHERE WILL SYMBOLIZE A NEW
ERA OF RESPONSIBILITY AND A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO CHANGE
NOT ONLY ON THE PART OF THE VOTERS, BUT OF THOSE WHO ARE
CHOSEN TO LEAD.

WE CAN CHANGE WHAT NEEDS CHANGING IN THIS NATION.

IT WILL REQUIRE LEADERSHIP, AND IT WILL REQUIRE PRESSURE
TO CREATE AND THEN GUIDE THAT LEADERSHIP,

AND IN THAT PROCESS I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOUNG AMERICANS
WILL BE HEARD -- AND THEY WILL BE HEDED,

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September 30, 1971

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator

FROM: Dan

SUBJECT: College Students and the Vote

At your Friday afternoon speech you are likely to be asked if you support efforts to enable college students to vote where they attend school.

A possible answer: As far as voting is concerned, a student should not be treated differently from anyone else, and that he has the right to establish a voting residence in his college community so long as he meets the legal definitions of residence applied to the other members of the community. I believe a man or woman's status as a student is not relevant under the Constitution to the purpose of determining residence.

I am pleased to see that a number of states have issued legal opinions permitting students to vote in their respective college communities.

In the Congress, I am a co-sponsor of the McGee National Voter Registration Act which would establish a thirty day residence requirement for Federal elections. I have also co-sponsored Senator Brooke's amendment to the Voting Rights Act of 1970 which would provide for the abolition of state residence requirements for Congressional elections. As you know, residence requirements were eliminated for election of the President and Vice President last year by the Goldwater amendment.



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