

001514

REMARKS BY HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

BEFORE

TEMPLE EMMANUEL

GREAT NECK, NEW YORK

Rabbi Robert Wisdom
Levi Teicher (Tysker)

APRIL 9, 1973

001515

DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

ALL FORMS OF GOVERNMENT ARE, IN SIMPLEST TERMS,
STRUCTURED ORGANIZATIONS OF SOCIETY.

FROM HIGH SCHOOL CIVIC, WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE MANY
FORMS OF GOVERNMENT--MANY WAYS TO ORGANIZE A SOCIETY:

1. ARISTOCRACY--IN WHICH A SMALL RULING CLIQUE
OF THE STATE'S "BEST CITIZENS" EXERCISE POWER.
2. MONARCHY--IN WHICH THE SUPREME POLITICAL POWER
ARE HELD BY A KING, QUEEN, OR SOME OTHER REGAL
POTENTATE.
3. TOTALITARIANISM--IN WHICH POLITICAL POWER IS
CONCENTRATED IN ONE MAN OR ONE GROUP AND THE
HOLDER OR HOLDERS OF THAT POWER CONTROLS ALMOST
EVERY ASPECT OF INDIVIDUAL LIFE.
4. DEMOCRACY, IN WHICH POLITICAL POWER IS EXERCISED
BY THE PEOPLE WHO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO ACT AS
AS THEIR AGENTS IN LAW MAKING.

REGARDLESS OF THE FORM, IN ALL GOVERNMENTS, THE
 CRUCIAL ISSUE IS THAT OF POLITICAL POWER AND POLITICAL
AUTHORITY:

--WHO HAS IT ?

--WHAT VALUES IT PROMOTES ?

--HOW IT IS EXERCISED. ?

IF GOVERNMENT MERELY EXISTED TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES--
 SUCH AS HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, OR CLOTHING, THEN ANYKIND
 OF GOVERNMENT WOULD DO.

↳ BUT WE IN UNITED STATES DEMAND MORE THAN ~~THE~~ A
~~SOCIETAL ORGANIZATION~~ ON WE DEMAND AT THE LEAST A GOVERNMENT
THAT PROMOTES --

1/ --LIBERTY; TO ALLOW A PERSON THE GREATEST AMOUNT
OF FREEDOM CONSISTENT WITH ORDER

1/ --EQUALITY; ~~ALL MEN CREATED EQUAL, HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS~~
AND OPPORTUNITIES. OPPORTUNITY

1/ --FRATERNITY; PERSONS MUST NOT MISUSE FREEDOM BUT
COOPERATE FOR GOOD OF SOCIETY.

-3-

--INDIVIDUALISM; PRIMARY TASK OF GOVERNMENT
IS TO ENABLE EACH PERSON TO ACHIEVE HIGHEST
POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

↳ MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL THE VALUES WE DEMAND AND EXPECT,

HOWEVER, IS THAT OF POPULAR SOVERIGNTY; ~~_____~~ *Partnership*

--A GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE JOINED TOGETHER BY THE
PRINCIPLE OF CONSENT, ~~social contract~~

--IN WHICH THE ULTIMATE POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND
POLITICAL POWER RESTS WITH THE PEOPLE AND REPRESENTATIVES ARE
ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PEOPLE.

↳ JOHN LOCKE SAID THAT THE PEOPLE HAVE A "SOCIAL CONTRACT"
WITH EACH OTHER AND THEIR GOVERNMENT:

↳ THE ONLY WAY MAN PUTS ON THE BONDS OF CIVIL
SOCIETY IS BY AGREEING WITH OTHER MEN TO JOIN AND
UNITE INTO A COMMUNITY FOR THEIR COMFORTABLE, SAFE,
PEACEABLE LIVING ONE AMONGST ANOTHER.

But
 L MAINTAINING THIS SOCIAL CONTRACT IS DIFFICULT IN A
 DEMOCRACY, ESPECIALLY IN AMERICA.

WHY?

① FIRST, THE DIVERSE NATURE OF THE AMERICAN POPULATION--
DIVERSE IN RELIGION, ETHNICALLY, RACIALLY, AND IDEOLOGICALLY,
CREATES VAST POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT.

LET US REMEMBER THAT RELIGIOUS WARS ARE NOT A THING OF
 THE PAST--I NEED ONLY POINT TO NORTHERN IRELAND; AND LET US NOT
 FORGET THAT RACIAL HATRED AND BIGOTRY CAN EASILY LEAD TO ARMED
 VIOLENCE--I NEED ONLY REMIND THIS AUDIENCE OF THE MIDDLE ^{1960's} 1960's.

② SECOND, OUR GREAT NATIONAL WEALTH CREATES IN OUR PEOPLE
SOARING EXPECTATIONS, DEMANDS FOR CONSUMER GOODS, DEMANDS FOR
EXPANDED OPPORTUNITY, FOR MORE AND MORE OF EVERYTHING *ALL OF*
 WHICH MAKES FOR COMPETING CLAIMS ON FINITE RESOURCES, CAUSING
FURTHER POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT--IF THOSE EXPECTATIONS AND
DEMANDS ARE NOT SATISFIED.

*Do
 Toog.*

L THESE TWO ELEMENTS MAKE OUR DEMOCRACY AT TIMES A "PRECARIOUS
 DEMOCRACY," SUBJECT PERHAPS TO PERPETUAL CRISES. *(Churchill)*

OF THESE CRISISES, THREE TYPES PREDOMINATE:

1. A CRISIS OF WARS

JOINING TOGETHER IN A SOCIETY PRESUPPOSES A SECURITY
AGREEMENT; WE KNOW THAT MAN WILL FIGHT MAN. WE HAVE A
HISTORY OF IT--THE CIVIL WAR, IN WHICH OUR OWN DEMOCRACY WAS TORN
APART; WORLD WAR I AND II, THE KOREAN WAR; AND THE VIET NAM WAR.
EVERY WAR LEAVES ITS HEARTBREAK FOR INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS AND
ITS CAR UPON OUR NATIONAL CONSCIOUS.

↳ THIS LAST WAR OF AMERICA--THE VIET NAM WAR IS NO EXCEPTION.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE VIET NAM WAR HAS MADE AMERICA RE-
 EXAMINE ITS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES--AND
TO POSE HARD CHOICES:

✓ | --WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS PEACE

IN LATIN AMERICA, THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THE FAR EAST?

--WHAT MUST BE THE EXTENT OF OUR COMMITMENTS?

2. A CRISIS OF LAWS

JAMES MADISON AT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION SAID:

FROM THE NATURE OF MAN, WE MAY BE SURE

L THAT THOSE WHO HAVE POWER IN THEIR HANDS WILL
 ALWAYS, WHEN THEY CAN, INCREASE IT.

AND, BEN FRANKLIN, AT THAT SAME CONVENTION, NOTED:

HERE ARE TWO PASSIONS WHICH HAVE AN

INFLUENCE ON THE AFFAIRS OF MEN: AMBITION

AND AVARICE; THE LOVE OF POWER AND THE LOVE OF MONEY.

L THROUGHOUT THE WRITINGS AND THE DELIBERATIONS AT THE
CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ONE THEME IS CLEAR: THE FEAR OF
A ALL POWERFUL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

*Power
corrupts*

L TO AVOID THIS CONDITION, THE FOUNDING FATHERS DECREED
 THAT THE ACCUMULATION OF ALL POWERS--LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE,
 AND JUDICIALS IN THE SAME HANDS MUST BE AVOIDED.

"AMBITION MUST BE MADE TO COUNTERACT AMBITION," SAID
 MADISON.

L AND, OUT OF THAT SIMPLE CREDO WERE BORN THE SEPARATION
OF POWERS, THE BILL OF RIGHTS, AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS TO THE
 CONSTITUTION--ALL PROPER TESTIMONY TO THE VALUE OF POPULAR

SOVERNIGTY, ORDERED LIBERTY, AND THE FEAR OF A ALL
POWERFUL CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

TODAY, THIS NATION FACES A CRISIS OF LAWS--A ^C CONSTITUTION-
 AL CRISIS.

- A) THE IMPOUNDMENT OF ^C CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATED
 FUNDS--IT IS ILLEGAL; IT REPRESENTS A ITEM VETO;
 IT IS EXECUTIVE ARROGANCE.
- B) DESIRE OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO CONCENTRATE IN
ITS HANDS POWER OVER THE PURSE--THROUGH THE UN-
 QUALIFIED USE OF A SPENDING CEILLING, CONGRESS
 MUST SET THE PRIORITIES, AND MUST MAINTAIN CONTROL
 OVER THE PURSE.
- C) WE SEE A STRUGGLE OVER THE MEANING OF THE FIRST
AMENDMENT--OVER FREEDOM OF THE PRESS: WE SEE THE
INTIMIDATION OF THE PRESS; THE BUGGING OF POLITICAL
CAMPAIGNS, THE CORRUPTING INFLUENCE OF THE WATERGATE
ON POLITICAL LIFE.

D) AND WE SEE A CONTINUING STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL
RIGHTS, CIVIL LIBERTATIES, AND EQUAL RIGHTS.

3. CRISIS OF SPIRIT.

AMERICA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MAGNAMOUS NATION--GIVING
FREELY OF ITS SONS, ITS WEALTH, ITS TALENT, AND EXPERTISE.

WE HAVE BEEN THE WORLD'S POLICEMEN AND WORLD'S
PROTECTOR.

BUT, WE CAN NOT LONGER PLAY THAT ROLE.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED:

A) OTHER COUNTRIES HAVE DEVELOPED: THE JAPANESE,
THE RUSSIANS, THE COMMON MARKET COUNTRIES, CHINA--
ALL PLAYING AN EXPANDED ECONOMIC ROLE IN ^{the} WORLD,
ALL BECOMING OR PRESENTLY NUCLEAR POWERS, ALL
WITH POWERFUL INDUSTRIAL MACHINES.

*Changed
world*

-9-

B) THERE HAS BEEN A TURNING INWARD IN AMERICA;

--WE SEEM TO BE LETTING SLIP THE IDEALS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, NEIGHBORLY HUMANITARIANISM, AND BROTHERHOOD, AND WE ARE SLIPPING INTO A NATIONAL MENTALITY THAT PUTS TOO MUCH EMPHASIS ON THE PROTECTION AND DEFENSE OF THE STATUS QUO.

--HAVING MADE IT INTO THE MIDDLE CLASS, MOST OF US I FEAR, ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH PROTECTING THE GAINS WE HAVE MADE THAN CLIMBING NEW PEAKS OF PERSONAL SUCCESS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Challenge C) THERE IS A GREAT CHALLENGE BEFORE US.

IT IS EASY TO SIT BACK--NOW THAT THE WAR IN VIET NAM IS OVER--AND CONCENTRATE ON KEEPING WHAT WE HAVE.

↳ WE CAN EASILY FORGET THAT THERE ARE THOSE AMONST US WHO ARE HUNGRY, POOR, AND DESTITUTE.

Easy to appeal to Prejudice & fear

WE CAN TURN OUR BACKS ON THE CITIES, THE RURAL
 AREAS, AND THE TREMENDOUS PEOPLE PROBLEMS STILL FACING THIS
 COUNTRY.

WE WENT THAT ROUTE ONCE BEFORE--AT THE END OF THE
 KOREAN WAR.

WE MUST NOT BE LULLED INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY
 OR SERENITY.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE 1960'S WERE BORN IN PART FROM THE
 INDIFFERENCE OF THE 1950'S SAID HUMPHREY.

WE MUST NOT LET THE PROBLEMS OF THE 1980 RESULT FROM
 THE ~~INDIFFERENCE~~ *indifference* OF THE 1970'S.

THE TIME IS NOW TO REKINDLE THE DYNAMICS, THE SENSE
 OF PROGRESS, THE SENSE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, THE SENSE OF CARING
 FOR OUR FELLOW MAN.

THAT IS THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US--TO BREATHE NEW LIFE
 INTO THE AMERICAN VALUES OF LIBERTY, EQUALITY, ~~FRATERNITY~~ *Pursuit of happiness* AND

INDIVIDUALISM, *Pursuit of happiness*

FRANKLIN D. ROSSVELT ONCE SAID THAT THE TEST OF
OUR PROGRESS IS NOT WHETHER WE ADD TO THE ABUNDANCE OF THOSE WHO
HAVE ^{too} MUCH; IT IS WHETHER WE PROVIDE ENOUGH FOR THOSE WHO HAVE
TOO LITTLE.

I DO NOT SEE THAT CHALLENGE BEING ACCEPTED BY THE
 PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON.

I SEE INSTEAD A NATION AND ITS LEADERS IN RETREAT ON
 ITS DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITIES.

IN HEALTH CARE, IN PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY,
IN PROVIDING FOR LOW COST HOUSING, IN AID TO OUR CITIES AND RURAL
AREAS, THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION AS EVIDENCED BY ITS BUDGET
OFFERS NOT HOPE BUT THE PROMISE OF DOING LESS,

THAT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

[A CRISIS SIMPLY CAN NOT BE ENDED BY DECLARING IT OVER.

Govt by Proclamation

POVERTY CAN NOT BE ERADICATED BY SIMPLY ALTERING

THE DEFINITION.

TO MEET THE CHALLENGE POSED BY THE CRISIS OF
SPIRIT IN OUR LAND, TAKES COMITMENT AND LEADERSHIP.

AND, IT TAKES PERSERVANCE BY OUR PEOPLE,

THAT IS THE CRISIS OF SPIRIT FACING OUR
DEMOCRACY,

AND, THAT IS THE CRISIS WE CAN NOT ALLOW TO PREVAIL.



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