

REMARKS OF FRANCES HUMPHREY HOWARD

ON BEHALF OF

SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

NATIONAL BLACK EDITORS AND PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE

Miami, Florida

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It is indeed an honor to be here on behalf of my brother Hubert who asked me to express his sincere regret at not being able to be with you this evening. You are his friends -- constant, caring, working together for over four decades for the fulfillment of the rights and human potential of all our people. The loyalty you have demonstrated to my brother over the years is something he prizes ever so deeply. I know he misses this chance to be with all of you once again to discuss the progress made and the journey that remains.

My brother has prepared a brief message which I would now like to share with you:

"Dear friends, I remain eternally grateful for the strong bonds of friendship which have characterized our relationship over the years. I will never forget the firm friendship you have extended to me, particularly during the 1968 Presidential campaign.

"I can recall when we first set up the National Newspaper Publishers Association Governmental Affairs Committee, and how much we in government benefitted from the candid discussions we had with leading black editors and publishers. I am aware the Vice President has been contacted about re-establishing this Committee, and you can be assured I will do all I can to see that it becomes operational once again.

"Much has occurred since we were together two years ago in Philadelphia. We have lost some dear friends -- friends who were very close to me personally. Cecil Newman of the Minneapolis Spokesman, Howard Woods of the St. Louis Sentinel, and Gene Rhodes of the Philadelphia Tribune. I pay special tribute to these three exceptional journalists whose style and ideals exemplified the conscience of America.

"You are now in your 151st year as an organization which has been the voice of the black press of America. You have raised the cry for equal rights and human justice from coast to coast. Your organization has been in the vanguard of the civil rights movement. You are the backbone of black leadership throughout the country, and you are to be commended for your courage, diligence and high ideals in the pursuit of equality and public service.

"I want to talk to you tonight about the continuation of this great struggle for human rights and human dignity.

"We are all fully aware that the civil rights struggles of the 1950's and 1960's did not eradicate inequality and injustice from our society.

"That is why I believe the concept of the civil rights movement must be broadened to include the rights and opportunities that should be available to all disadvantaged groups in America. I know this is your goal as well.

"The struggle for civil rights is a struggle for the rights and privileges and duties of all Americans. And what do these rights include?

"-- The right to a meaningful life, free from poverty that today afflicts some 25 million Americans.

-- The right to full and equal protection under the law -- an end to the double standard applied to many of those who are less privileged, where justice delayed can become justice denied.

--The right to productive and gainful employment -- for all our people, as a specific national goal toward whose achievement we will apply every possible private and public resource.

--The right to economic, political and social opportunity where progress toward realizing one's full potential will confront no artificial barrier of discrimination based on race, creed or sex.

--The right to a decent neighborhood.

--The right to a life free from violence and terrorism.

--The right to quality education at all levels, free from segregation.

--The right to live in good health under a system that helps assure modern health care for all at the lowest possible cost.

--The right to be free from hunger and malnutrition.

--And the right to a clean and wholesome environment.

"These rights belong to all American people. Without them there are no real civil or human rights.

"The new dimensions of civil rights are to be found in the living and working conditions of our people.

"This is our challenge, for if we cannot overcome the economic and social obstacles to the full participation of our citizens in our society, the hard-won political and civil rights of the last two decades will hold little meaning for millions of our people.

"Here in the United States, we have the most heterogeneous mixture of races, religions and nationalities ever to coexist peacefully under the tent of democracy. And we are the world's oldest democracy, which has completed celebrating two centuries of freedom.

"I am an optimist. There is every reason to believe that our third century can be one of expanding freedom and opportunity for all Americans.

"We live by hope. We do not always get all we want when we want it. But we have to believe that someday, somehow, someday it will be better, and that we can make it so.

"Your organization has always risen to the challenges presented by a less than perfect society, and I know you will continue to do so until we finally achieve the ideal human condition for all our citizens.

"Again, I deeply regret that I am unable to be with you personally tonight. But I urge you to make a New Year's resolution that you will stay on course, and continue to work to overcome the barriers to genuine freedom and opportunity for all our people."

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