

REMARKS OF SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

DEDICATION OF THE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY HEW BUILDING

Washington, D. C.

November 1, 1977

Mr. President, Vice President Mondale, Secretary Califano, Mr. Solomon, Chaplain Elson, distinguished colleagues and countrymen, dear friends...

When my colleagues in the Congress passed a bill to name this important federal building for me, I warned them - I promised them - that the gesture left me speechless. Words still are inadequate to express my delight and gratitude.

I do, however, want to say a special word of thanks to my friend Bob Dole, who sparked this whole occasion. It's not often in this town that a Kansas Republican takes the lead in honoring a Minnesota Democrat.

I will not seek to respond to the kind and extravagant tributes that have warmed my heart today, except to say that few men enjoy a comparable privilege of being so lavishly praised while they can still enjoy it.

From my father I absorbed a respect for history. So I try to step back occasionally to view events in the larger perspective of the history that moves around us, shapes our challenges, and carries our imprint.

It makes me doubly conscious of the rare and singular honor it is to have a formal niche in this grand living pageant reserved in my name. To know that the principles of social and economic justice, of hope and solidarity and opportunity that have inspired me, will continue to thrive and flourish in a building bearing my name, is a great gift indeed.

But I am certain that the tremendous tributes of friendship that have buoyed my spirits concern more than just Hubert H. Humphrey, and make irrelevant the limitations of which I am only too aware.

There is no shortage of heroes. Among any group of average Americans are tales of heroism and devotion enough to glorify the Lord and vindicate his works. I am one laborer in the Lord's vineyard. Why am I so richly rewarded?

Apparently, people do not identify only with winners. They also identify, and with warmth and enthusiasm, with folks who lose a round or two, but who fight on against the odds.

That's not the same as being a good loser. I know that I personally have been a good loser only because I always have been determined to return for another round.

This outpouring of affection, which I return with principal and interest, has a symbolic dimension. It is an affirmation of values and hopes that I share with millions of Americans, that sustain and motivate each of us to do his best, that give vigor and moral direction to our representative institutions. Public service has confirmed my faith in the potential of the human spirit, its generosity, its idealism, its capacity for growth, its resilience, and its infinite resources.

It is gratifying to know that this building, which bears my name, will house public servants dedicated to the ennobling task of advancing the health, education and welfare of their fellow Americans.

Under this roof, and inspired by the leadership of a President and Vice President with vision and compassion, and mobilized by a dynamic and determined Secretary, new and better efforts to promote human welfare will be developed and administered.

All of them will move us closer to our goal of insuring to every child the opportunity to grow and develop to his or her fullest potential, to every adult a life of industry and dignity, and to every aged American, a twilight of serenity and independence.

I thank you all.

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NOVEMBER 1, 1977

↳ MR. PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, SECRETARY CALIFANO,

MR. SOLOMON, CHAPLAIN ELSON, DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUES AND

~~COUNTRYMEN~~, DEAR FRIENDS...

↳ WHEN MY COLLEAGUES IN THE CONGRESS PASSED A BILL TO NAME
THIS IMPORTANT FEDERAL BUILDING FOR ME, I WARNED THEM - I

PROMISED THEM - THAT THE GESTURE LEFT ME SPEECHLESS. ↳ WORDS

STILL ARE INADEQUATE TO EXPRESS MY DELIGHT AND GRATITUDE.

↳ I DO, HOWEVER, WANT TO SAY A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS TO

MY FRIEND BOB DOLE, WHO SPARKED THIS WHOLE OCCASION. ↳ IT'S

NOT OFTEN IN THIS TOWN THAT A KANSAS REPUBLICAN TAKES THE

LEAD IN HONORING A MINNESOTA DEMOCRAT.

*and Jennings Randolph
and at first -
entire mission delegation
Ward*

↳ I WILL NOT SEEK TO RESPOND TO THE KIND AND

EXTRAVAGANT TRIBUTES THAT HAVE WARMED MY HEART TODAY,

EXCEPT TO SAY THAT FEW MEN ENJOY A COMPARABLE PRIVILEGE OF

BEING SO LAVISHLY PRAISED WHILE THEY CAN STILL ENJOY IT.

↳ FROM MY FATHER I ABSORBED A RESPECT FOR HISTORY; So, I

TRY TO STEP BACK OCCASIONALLY TO VIEW EVENTS IN THE LARGER

PERSPECTIVE OF THE HISTORY THAT MOVES AROUND US, SHAPES OUR

CHALLENGES, AND CARRIES OUR IMPRINT.

↳ IT MAKES ME DOUBLY CONSCIOUS OF THE RARE AND SINGULAR

HONOR IT IS TO HAVE A FORMAL NICHE IN THIS "GRAND LIVING

PAGEANT" RESERVED IN MY NAME. ↳ TO KNOW THAT THE PRINCIPLES

OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE, OF HOPE AND ~~SOLIDARITY~~

AND OPPORTUNITY THAT HAVE INSPIRED ME, WILL CONTINUE TO

THRIVE AND FLOURISH IN A BUILDING BEARING MY NAME, IS A

GREAT GIFT INDEED.

↳ BUT I AM CERTAIN THAT THE ~~FREQUENT~~ TRIBUTES OF
FRIENDSHIP THAT HAVE BUOYED MY SPIRITS CONCERN MORE THAN
JUST HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, AND MAKE IRRELEVANT THE LIMITATIONS
OF WHICH I AM ONLY TOO AWARE.

↳ THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF HEROES. ↳ AMONG ANY GROUP OF
AVERAGE AMERICANS ARE TALES OF HEROISM AND DEVOTION ENOUGH
TO GLORIFY THE LORD AND VINDICATE HIS WORKS. ↳ I AM ~~ONE~~ *but one*
LABORER IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD. ↳ WHY AM I SO RICHLY REWARDED?

↳ APPARENTLY, PEOPLE DO NOT IDENTIFY ONLY WITH WINNERS. ↳ THEY
ALSO IDENTIFY, AND WITH WARMTH AND ENTHUSIASM, WITH FOLKS WHO
LOSE A ROUND OR TWO, BUT WHO FIGHT ON AGAINST THE ODDS.

↳ THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS BEING A GOOD LOSER.

∟ I KNOW THAT I PERSONALLY HAVE BEEN A GOOD LOSER ONLY BECAUSE

I ALWAYS HAVE BEEN DETERMINED TO RETURN FOR ANOTHER ROUND ○

∟ THIS OUTPOURING OF AFFECTION, WHICH I RETURN WITH
PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST, HAS A SYMBOLIC DIMENSION. IT IS
AN AFFIRMATION OF VALUES AND HOPES THAT I SHARE WITH
MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, THAT SUSTAIN AND MOTIVATE EACH OF
US TO DO HIS BEST, THAT GIVE VIGOR AND MORAL DIRECTION
TO OUR REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS. ∟ PUBLIC SERVICE HAS
CONFIRMED MY FAITH IN THE POTENTIAL OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT,
ITS GENEROSITY, ITS IDEALISM, ITS CAPACITY FOR GROWTH,
ITS RESILIENCE, AND ITS INFINITE RESOURCES.

∟ IT IS GRATIFYING TO KNOW THAT THIS BUILDING,

WHICH BEARS MY NAME, WILL HOUSE PUBLIC SERVANTS DEDICATED TO
THE ~~PROBING~~ TASK OF ADVANCING THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND
WELFARE OF THEIR FELLOW AMERICANS!

↳ UNDER THIS ROOF, AND INSPIRED BY THE LEADERSHIP OF A
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT WITH VISION AND COMPASSION, AND
MOBILIZED BY A DYNAMIC AND DETERMINED SECRETARY, NEW AND BETTER
EFFORTS TO PROMOTE HUMAN WELFARE WILL BE DEVELOPED AND
ADMINISTERED.

↳ ALL OF THEM WILL MOVE US CLOSER TO OUR GOAL OF INSURING TO
EVERY CHILD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW AND DEVELOP TO HIS OR HER
FULLEST POTENTIAL, TO EVERY ADULT A LIFE OF INDUSTRY AND DIGNITY,
AND TO EVERY ~~OLD~~ ^{OLDER} AMERICAN, A TWILIGHT OF SERENITY AND INDEPENDENCE.

I THANK YOU ALL.



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