



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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TOASTMASTER'S ADDRESS BY MAX M. KAMPELMAN AT BANQUET IN HONOR OF
EMIL RIEVE AND HUBERT H. HUMPHREY, MARCH 6, 1948, HOTEL NICOLLET,
MINNEAPOLIS.

In the time of Nero, when sport-loving Romans crowded the Coliseum every Saturday to see a Christian tossed to the lions (on some Sundays there were double headers), there was a special victim who had given the authorities untold trouble before he was rounded up.

Nero had 11 of his most ferocious lions starved for a full week to assure a neat performance when they were turned on the Christian the following Saturday.

80,000 spectators turned out, not including the press. The Christian stood alone in the center of the arena, calm and unafraid. The first lion was released. He made a bee line for the Christian. The crowd wetted its lips. But then an amazing thing happened. The Christian bent down and whispered something in the lion's ear.

The lion's tail went between his legs; he lowered his head and slinked out of the arena.

When the same performance was followed by 6 more half-starved kings of the forest; and the gallant crowd was beginning to holler for its money back, Nero, sore as a pup, summoned the Christian and curtly said:

"If you will tell me what you say to those lions to make them act that way, I will grant you a full pardon".

"It's very simple, Nero", explained the Christian.

"I just whisper in their ears: 'Remember, you'll be expected to say a few words after dinner'".

Yes, after dinner speaking is a well established custom.

In the days of the Bible, it was considered a miracle for an ass to speak - Now, it's nothing short of a miracle if you can keep one quiet.

It's difficult to understand this. There is a Chinese proverb that the wise man prefers to keep his mouth shut and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.

Yet here I am on my feet talking to you.

There is the story of Abe Lincoln who was asked how he felt to be President. He said it was like the story of the man who was tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail. When he was asked by a heckler in the audience as he was leaving town how he liked it, he said - if it weren't for the honor of the think he'd rather walk.

I too would rather be with the pretty girls in the audience. But it is an honor.

It's an honor to be part of a movement, the TWUA, which is alive and alert to the needs of our day.

We are living in a society which is sick, which is talking of a third world war before the peace treaties of the second are signed. It can't make up its mind whether to blow its brains out or eat its heart out.

The tragedy of Czechoslovakia's recent catastrophe is a further indication of democracy's danger.

And in this, one of the last strongholds of democracy, millions are poverty-stricken and homeless amid great wealth - and there is no political movement which speaks for us in the liberal social-democratic tradition of our labor movement.

On the one hand there is a fossilized insensitive party of reaction, calling themselves Republican.

On the other hand there is a divided chaotic Democratic Party, disintegrating before our eyes from the corruption of machine politics and the cruel barbarities of poll tax prejudice of the South.

And on the third hand there has recently been presented to us the dishonest alternative of a camouflaged Communist Party which calls itself a Third Party.

On that scene, the TWUA served notice today that it will begin to do something about these problems. Our workers have come from all over the state and neighboring states, in bad weather, to spend a day thinking together and planning for action.

For we know that in a democracy it matters what we think.

Bad government is made by good people who do not vote. And we're going to vote, we are going to act, we are going to learn.

We know that an educated people is easy to lead, yes, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.

We have demonstrated our determination today. We've had a hard day, but a good conference.

Humphrey Introduction at Textile Dinner:

A minister, a scientist and a politician were adrift on a life raft in the tropics. At last they sighted land. But the wind died down while they were a short way off the beach.

The politician, the only one who could swim, volunteered to go ashore with a line and pull the raft to land. The minister knelt and prayed for his safety.

Then the politician dived in. His companions saw the black fin of a shark making straight for him - the shark disappeared and then came up on the other side, having passed under the swimmer.

Shortly, they saw an even bigger shark darting toward him, but this one also swerved in time.

After the politician had reached shallow water, the minister said to the scientist:

"There, you doubting Thomas, there is proof of the power of prayer".

"Power of prayer, hell", retorted the scientist - "That was just professional courtesy".

Politicians are the most unfortunate people in the world. Probably no hell for them, they suffer so much in this world.

Tempted to add my word of criticism too, for it's fun. But as toastmaster, I must be impartial.

I'd like to tell you of a definition I heard the other day of political bedfellows ; They share the same bunk!

But I cannot. I must be nice. One of our guests is a politician. It's hard to be nice. I'd like to show you, for example, how close politicians are to talented actors: When a politician looks in a mirror, it's a love scene. - But I cannot, he's a friend of mine.

But I must say this, it isn't true what they say about honesty and politicians. It isn't true that an honest politician is one who when he's bought will stay bought... That's cynical and we're not cynical.

In fact, under Humphrey's administration, the motto is: "God help those who help themselves" ; - and we love him for it. We in Minneapolis are fortunate in having a good mayor - a unique personality. One who in a short time has aroused the imagination of liberals all over the US.

He is taking the anemia out of liberalism.

Talking to Verne, his driver, who complained he was tired all the time and he added: "I don't make the speeches either"... In his first year, he wore out 4 chauffeurs.... At a recent press conference, reporter for TIMES asked Rieve to support him for the Senate or any job:

"Get him out of City Hall", he said. "He tires me out", "I can't keep up".

Those of us who know him say he fits the description Anatole France gave of Cicero: "in politics he was a moderate of the most violent description".

But we like our Mayor, not only because he is active, likeable, down to earth, genuine. Also because in the noblest traditions of the great democratic figures of the world, he has abandoned expediency for principle. He has recognized that it is the task of the great moral leaders of men in world history to comfort the afflicted, yes, but also to afflict the comfortable.

Time and time again HH has demonstrated his friendship to labor and has recognized that his greatest demonstration of that friendship is remaining steadfast, honest, firm for democracy; opposed to the totalitarianism of the right or left whatever the cost.

That is why we like him

We like him so much in Minneapolis that we want to share him with you.

Answer of the girl in a geography class. Asked to ~~xxxxx~~ locate Washington DC, in a fortuitous and inspired error: "Washington DC is hounded on all sides by the USA."

I want to predict that Washington DC will soon be hounded on all sides by Huber H Humphrey.

Next Senator from the state of Minnesota, HH Humphery, Jr.