

SENATOR ROBERT MORGAN  
"DANIELS' DAY"  
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HUBERT HUMPHREY  
AND LEADERSHIP

It gives me great pleasure to be here today, to share some thoughts with you on this occasion.

Exactly five years ago today, a great man came to Buies Creek, in my home county of Harnett, to help me kick off my campaign to the U.S. Senate. Today, I would like to pay tribute to that man, Hubert Horatio Humphrey, and the legacy he left our nation.

We are living in troubled times. I think that our President is right when he described our fundamental problem as a failure of spirit and will. If we as a society can mobilize the spirit and will that made us a great nation, the so-called intractable problems such as energy and inflation can and will be solved. In trying to mobilize the will of our people, I believe that it would be productive to look at the Humphrey example.

Capturing the essence of Hubert Humphrey is not an easy task. He was a man of many qualities. As his life evolved, he touched our nation and the world in

many different ways.

When I think of Humphrey, I think of his many qualities. His life was marked by conviction, conviction that was real and deep, yet tempered by the need for compromise. He had strength, strength that was real, yet tempered by kindness.

I do not come here today to dwell in the past, to pay one more tribute to the fallen Happy Warrior, as much as many of us continue to feel the loss of this great patriot and friend.

Humphrey himself would not want us to mourn.

Rather, he would have us think of his life, his zeal, his creativity, as a possible model for our own lives.

No, Humphrey was not a man of yesterday -- but a man of today and tomorrow.

Now, I would not care to leave any misimpression.

I did not know Humphrey well before I came to the Senate. My only significant encounter with him before coming to Washington was when I met him at the beginning of my own Senate campaign trail at Buies Creek. But I did come to have a special understanding for this

remarkable man. Not only did we sit near one another in the Senate, but we had adjoining offices for the last year of his life.

It was my great pleasure to have shared authorship of two bills with Senator Humphrey. These two bills reflect something of both the decency and philosophy of the late Vice President.

The first bill was legislation for a Universal Free School Lunch Program. It was our shared belief that this bill would accomplish a variety of objectives.

First, a Free Lunch Program would eliminate all discrimination between paying and non-paying students in the present lunch program. Now, poor children are stigmatized by their identification as poor through this program.

Second, the legislation would reduce sizeable administration expenditures at the federal, state and local levels.

Third, and most importantly, we both saw the lunch program as an integral part of the school program as a whole. As such, we saw nutrition as

something too important to leave out of our total "system" of education.

The second bill we worked closely together on was the Rural Housing Act of 1977. There are too many features of this legislation to repeat here. But the bill was just one of the many bills that Humphrey developed in the interest of furthering the welfare of rural people.

The essence of Humphrey's leadership ability can be divided into two parts. One part has to do with style. The other part has to do with philosophy.

Humphrey's style was dynamic and positive almost until his very death. On December 19, just three weeks before he died, he made his last speech in Washington. Humphrey's staff had prepared a brief talk on the subject of world hunger. As usual, Humphrey was not short on words, especially words with meaning and beauty. The Happy Warrior, his body wrecked by cancer, spoke for 40 minutes in an enlightened and eloquent manner.

Humphrey believed in work, determination, and high goals. Humphrey first visited Washington in

1935, some 14 years before he would become a resident as a U.S. Senator. Upon visiting Washington, Humphrey became fascinated with the city and what it meant to our country and the world. He wrote back to Muriel, or Bucky, whom he would later marry, to tell her that the city had inspired him to set his sights on Congress. It was that sort of positive ambition that typified Humphrey.

It is difficult for me to fully capture Humphrey's philosophy. I will try the best I can but must rest my thoughts knowing that history will be the ultimate judge.

First, Humphrey believed that government could and should be a positive force in the lives of those otherwise overlooked by our capitalist system. For example, one can think of the civil rights acts, his full employment legislation or any number of other bills concerning education, housing and rural development.

Now let there be no doubt. Humphrey was a capitalist. He saw flaws in our political system but he considered this system the most superior in the world. What he saw was an economic system that encou-

raged concentrations of powers that necessarily, but tragically, left some individuals severely disadvantaged.

I think it is important to stress, for clarification, that Humphrey did not believe that individuals should get something for nothing. Humphrey, as much as any member of the Senate, despised welfare and knew that individuals took advantage of the generosity of the system. Humphrey would have preferred a full-employment society rather than a welfare state. He believed that government should plan and develop the techniques to encourage and bring about full employment, principally

in the private sector.

But Humphrey realized that full employment was, at best, a remote possibility, despite the best possible efforts of a partnership between government and business. As a consequence, Humphrey was convinced that America, this compassionate society, should care for its poor and weak, the disadvantaged. In other words, welfare was a practical necessity in an increasingly complex and mobile world.

Another most integral part of the Humphrey

philosophy and style was his notion concerning forgiveness. If anyone was entitled to carry a grudge, it was Humphrey.

Humphrey was never bitter in defeat. His ability to forgive and forget was incredible. There was a method, though, in this madness. Humphrey believed in forgiveness because he was strong and intelligent enough to realize that today's enemy could be tomorrow's friend. Humphrey grew stronger through a bit of understanding and love instead of bitterness and hatred.

Another feature of Humphrey's character was his devotion and love for children.

During his campaign for the Presidency in 1968, the Happy Warrior was allegedly spending as much time with his children and grandchildren as he was with his political strategists. I recall another occasion when Humphrey was about 10 minutes late in leaving for a meeting with Vice President Mondale. While enroute to the meeting at the Capitol, Humphrey spied a group of children. Needless to say, Humphrey's tardiness was extended by another 15 minutes. Just think about

that -- putting children above the Vice President of the United States.

Why did Humphrey love children so much? I think that Humphrey loved children for at least two reasons. First, they were innocent. Second, they represented the future and Humphrey always looked ahead, never back. Humphrey wanted the children of America and the world to have a better tomorrow without fear and want. Humphrey hoped that he could play a role in creating a world that could be positive and constructive. Humphrey wanted tomorrow's leaders, or today's

children, to have opportunities that were denied to him when he was growing up as a small child in the plains of America.

Humphrey was more than forward-looking, determined, a man of tomorrow, and compassionate. Humphrey believed that injustices of all kinds and shapes and colors should be fought. He became a voice for those without a voice in the Congress. He led the battle for Civil Rights and worked tirelessly to help in numerous labor struggles. Likewise, Humphrey did as much as any American to promote a more constructive image for

our Jewish brothers.

Humphrey was for the downtrodden not only because he was against injustice, but because he believed in the pursuit of happiness, a concept that is embodied in our Constitution. Humphrey was always optimistic, indeed internally optimistic, about the future of our nation and its people. Humphrey knew that if we were to have true and full pursuit of happiness for all our people, then injustices of any kind against all people should and must be fought and overcome.

My comments today necessarily must be brief.

It is, as I said very early in my comments, difficult to capture the essence of this great man. I hope that I may have given you a deeper appreciation of this complex and great individual. I miss him, but I value the example he gave our nation and the world. I could have recounted his many legislative accomplishments but that would have over-emphasized substance at the expense of character -- something that I wanted to touch upon today.

I thank you for this opportunity.