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The Life and Political Career of Hubert Horatio Humphrey

A thesis

presented to the department of History

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in History

by

Dylan Cody McNutt

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Dr. Daryl A. Carter

Dr. Elwood Watson

Dr. Henry Antkiewicz

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ABSTRACT

The Life and Political Career of Hubert Horatio Humphrey

by

Dylan Cody McNutt

Hubert Horatio Humphrey never reached the Oval Office, but his accomplishments during his tenure as mayor, senator, and Vice President are just as noteworthy. During Humphrey's political career he played a pivotal role in the most influential period of liberal American politics. During his youth and college years Humphrey became learned how to remain loyal to the people around him, and about the racial divisions of the South. Most research on Vice President Humphrey analyzes his time as a Senator, Vice President, and the 1968 Presidential election. *The Life and Political Career of Hubert Humphrey*, examines Humphrey's life in its entirety through themes and life lessons as he became the conscience of the nation. Furthermore, *The Life and Political Career of Hubert Humphrey*, examines the relationship between President Lyndon B. Johnson and Vice President Humphrey and how Humphrey's loyalty caused with the nation's conscience to fall short of his lifelong goal.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Vice President Hubert Horatio Humphrey is a name that is often left out of textbooks. Despite the lack of his name appearing in these textbooks Humphrey was one of the greatest politicians of the twentieth century. He was a champion of human and civil rights who looked to improve the overall American experience for anyone regardless of sex, race, or socioeconomic class. Humphrey used many attributes that he learned during his youth, young adult life, and his college years to become one of the most successful politicians in United States history. Humphrey never reached the Oval Office, but he did change the direction of the Democratic Party for seventy plus years. His national plea, shortly after becoming a senator, for the Democratic Party to act on the issue of civil rights in 1948 urged his party to become the party for all Americans. In the Senate, he met one of his closest friends Lyndon Johnson. The two men were forever intertwined moving forward. Humphrey's success mostly stems from his years in the Senate. His most notable achievement was his masterpiece in getting the Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed which ended America's Second Reconstruction.

His work on the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 propelled him to being the frontrunner for the Vice Presidency in 1964 under Lyndon Johnson. Humphrey indeed became Vice President, but the decision hindered his ultimate goal of becoming president instead the experience being beneficial. Johnson and Humphrey's relationship drastically changed from 1964 until 1968. Despite the catastrophes of 1968, it was the year for Humphrey as he became the Democratic Party's nominee for the presidency. Humphrey struggled building his own identity, despite Johnson dropping out of the race which ultimately costed the Democratic Party the presidency in 1968. Suffering a brutal loss during the election Humphrey spent the remainder

of his political career in the Senate, writing his personal memoirs, and considering one last shot at becoming the President of the United States. Unfortunately, Vice President Humphrey never did achieve his ultimate goal as he passed away in January of 1978 from Bladder cancer.

Chapter one focuses on Humphrey's life from birth until his master's thesis defense. The most essential point from this chapter is to understand the development of Humphrey's loyalty which defined his life and public career going forward. Humphrey became aware of importance of business and economics early in his life. As a young boy Humphrey overheard many conversations with his father and other townspeople while working in his father's shop that helped mold the political genius of Humphrey. His family moved around a lot and his father had to move his business numerous times, especially when Hubert left for college. Humphrey met future cabinet officials and lifelong colleagues during his time in Minnesota. His time at Louisiana State University for his master's degree introduced him to something he never witnessed first-hand. Witnessing the harsh reality of the Jim Crow South forever defined the direction of Humphrey's political career.

Chapter two focuses on Humphrey's perusal and time as the Mayor's Office in Minneapolis. The main point of this chapter is transformation as not only the city of Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota change, but also Mayor Humphrey's view changes from a singular city in Minneapolis to a national view as he makes his career defining speech in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the 1948 Democratic National Convention.

Chapter three examines Humphrey's career in the early part of his Senatorial career. The most important part of this chapter is to understand the concept that compromise is not a dirty word. Early in Humphrey's time in the Senate he made numerous enemies in the South for breaking Senate codes and of course his civil rights speech in 1948. During his time in the Senate

Humphrey met Lyndon B. Johnson. The two men became intertwined forever going forward. Humphrey's relationship with Johnson helped him learn how to compromise with the Southern Democrats going forward.

Chapter four examines Humphrey's career from 1956 until being on the eve of the Vice Presidency. The most important part of this chapter is to understand Humphrey's grit and integrity as he finally proves himself on the national stage by playing an essential role in the passage of the greatest civil rights legislation in nearly one hundred years. Humphrey spent the majority of the late 1950s trying to make a national name for himself in preparation for an unsuccessful presidential campaign against John F. Kennedy in 1960. Humphrey realized the importance of the fundraising, media usage, and public image during this campaign. Humphrey spent his years under President Kennedy as Senate Majority whip. After the assassination of Kennedy in 1963, President Johnson knew he needed to get the civil rights bill passed to cement not only his own legacy, but also that of Kennedy. Humphrey fought tooth and nail to finally gain southern approval through compromise and grit.

Chapter five focuses on the strained relationship between President Johnson and Vice President Hubert Humphrey. The most important part of this chapter is to focus on how President Johnson treated Humphrey and destroyed his public image. President Johnson used to have Vice President Humphrey dress up as a cowboy at his ranch and guide the President around while he was on a horse. Johnson banished Humphrey from the White House for nearly a year because of their contradicting views on Vietnam.

The final chapter examines Humphrey's 1968 Presidential campaign and his life afterwards. The most important point of this chapter is to understand the importance of Humphrey's lifelong commitment to being loyal to his supporters and friends. In 1968,

Humphrey was not able to shed his loyalty to President Johnson which likely ruined his shot at the Oval Office. When Humphrey returned to the Senate he continued his relationship with his closest political ally in Labor. Humphrey always remained loyal to some of his closest friends and colleagues as they pursued their own careers in public office such as Orville Freeman, Eugene McCarthy, and Walter Mondale. Lastly, until his death at age sixty-seven Humphrey remained loyal to being a liberal Democrat.

CHAPTER 2

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

Hubert Horatio Humphrey was born in Wallace, South Dakota, in 1911, to Hubert Horatio Humphrey Sr. and Christine Sannes. The Humphrey family moved to Doland, South Dakota in 1917. The younger Hubert was born in a room above his father's shop. He had three other family members, one older brother named Ralph and two young sisters Frances and Fern. His father was a licensed pharmacist who served as mayor and a town council member. The elder Humphrey also served briefly in the state legislature in South Dakota and was a delegate at the 1944 and 1948 Democratic National Conventions.¹ Often customers made the remark that Hubert Sr. "would not sell you a pill without selling you an idea."² In Hubert's youth, he spent much of his time working in his father's shop and often overheard numerous conversations that influenced his life. While Hubert Sr. sold pills at the drug store he also became a key political figure in Doland. He was only one of five Democrats in the historically Republican town.

Upon graduation from Doland High School, Hubert decided to attend the University of Minnesota. His father did not like the idea of Hubert attending college. The last thing the elder Humphrey said to his son was "for now on, it's on you" and left his son behind as he returned to the drugstore.³ On his first day at the University of Minnesota his life changed. Humphrey met Mrs. Zimmerman, or Ma Zim, who became an early friend of the young Hubert. Ma Zim urged to enjoy his years in college and urged him to learn how to dance and enjoy his time in college and eventually go to the Marigold. The Marigold was a popular dance hall for college aged

¹ Solberg, Carl. *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*. (St. Paul, MN: Borealis Books, 2003), 40.

² Humphrey, Hubert H., Norman Sherman. *The Education of a Public Man: My Life in Politics*. (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 8.

³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 22.

people to meet each other during the late nineteen twenties and this is where Hubert met his first girlfriend, Gloria Bock. He met her at a dance club. It had the greatest impact on his life during his first round of college. During his freshman year he was active in the classroom and decided to join the debate team. Hubert was given ten dollars a week to live on during his first semester of college and often hitchhiked three hundred and ten miles home on the weekends to visit his family in Doland.⁴ However, during Christmas break Hubert received bad news from his father. The elder Humphrey was no longer able to pay his son's allowance while he was away. Consequently, Hubert obtained a job at Swoboda's campus drugstore washing dishes for a mere twenty five cents an hour.⁵

During the fall his father declared that it was Hubert's brother Ralph's turn to go to college. The elder Humphrey needed one of them to help run the drugstore and this meant Hubert needed to return to South Dakota. Subsequently Ralph, inherited the position Hubert previously held at Swoboda's. Hubert began to work for his father until the end of Christmas break. His Uncle Harry came to the aid of Hubert after hearing about his situation. Uncle Harry sent Hubert a fifty dollar check this allowed him to return to Minnesota for at least one more semester.⁶

In 1931, Humphrey Sr.'s pharmacy shop nearly went bankrupt and he decided to give up on Doland and pursue pharmacy in Huron, at the time the fifth largest in the state, fifty miles to the south of Doland. At age twenty Hubert Humphrey began to notice the importance of economics. Huron, South Dakota, had a population of eleven thousand, squashing their former town's population. In March, the *Daily Huronite* had an ad for the new drug store named

⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 28.

⁵ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 47.

⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 30.

Humphrey's Advantages. He and his father developed the slogan "Humphrey wants to see you." At first the new business did not have many customers which caused the Humphrey family to cut the prices of their goods to obtain more business. However, opening the new shop required both Hubert and Ralph to dropout of college after winter exams so their father could build his business.

Throughout his entire life Hubert always admired his father and became extremely loyal to him, but being forced out of college really strained their relationship. With Hubert's personal goals postponed he aided his father the next five years. During this time he started have fainting spells and a nervous stomach, however, in large part due to stress, this changed once he left his father's store in 1937.⁷ Some of the most frequent visitors to their shop were farmers from the surrounding areas. The Humphrey's often barked with their guests if they did not have enough money to purchase their desired goods. The Humphrey's often traded medicine for chicken, potatoes, and other foods to later sell for profit at the shop. Hubert spent most of his days running the shop and in the basement, creating vaccines for local farmers animals as his father traveled from town to town selling the product.

On Armistice Day 1932, the first dust storm hit Huron, causing many farmers to lose their farms to foreclosure, banks to fail, and depressing grain prices.⁸ The dust storms caused many local farmers to rally throughout the town. Hubert Sr., told Hubert, "Respect them, what they spend in our store keeps us in business."⁹ In 1936, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt went to South Dakota to observe the catastrophe striking the state. Hubert Sr. met with the president, and brought his son with him. Hubert Sr. then became chairman of the local

⁷ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 58.

⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 49.

⁹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 49.

Democratic Party and gradually started to think about running for Congress. Hubert Sr., however, remained determined to keep Hubert in the pharmaceutical business. His father relied heavily on Hubert because he was the only one of his two sons qualified enough to write prescriptions. Hubert Sr. began planning for his son to take over the business while he was campaigning. Hubert remained loyal to his father and agreed to attend college at Capitol College of Pharmacy in Denver, Colorado.¹⁰ Hubert exceeded his father's expectations of him and completed a two year program in only six months. This became a turning point in Hubert's life.

While working at his father's shop in Huron he met Muriel Buck. This was not their first encounter. Earlier they had briefly met at a college dance. There was tension between Hubert and Muriel's father Andy Buck. Buck also had a shop in Huron. However, as the two began to date the importance of the shop became very evident. Hubert stated "that the shop always came first" and their dates subsequently occurred after the store closed for the day.¹¹

Humphrey's parents encouraged him to remain in Huron as a pharmacist, but friends and relatives had other ideas for his life. His earliest influence came from his Uncle Harry in Washington, D.C., Harry allowed Hubert's sister Frances to stay with him while she was going to college and wanted Hubert to get an education. His former principal at Doland High told him that he had not yet tapped his full potential. Every Sunday, Hubert and Muriel spent their morning at their friend's house. Dewey and Mrs. Van Dyke, a close family friend from his church, also played a major role in encouraging Hubert to go back to school and become somebody.¹²

¹⁰ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 50.

¹¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 50.

¹² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 51.

The Van Dyke family played a major role in getting Hubert away from his father's shop in South Dakota. Their only son was in a scout troop led by Hubert. The troop went to Washington D.C. and they stayed with Hubert's Uncle Harry. The experience of Washington resonated with Hubert for quite a while. While in Washington, Hubert got to see the Jefferson Memorial, go to the Senate gallery, and witness a fiery speech delivered by Huey Long , a Democrat from Louisiana.¹³ For the first time since Hubert left his native town he felt the need to express his very own opinion. In his first letter to Muriel he expressed a message that his Uncle Harry had hoped he would realize. Hubert wrote Muriel about his experience in the nation's capital, stating, "This trip has impressed one thing on my mind, Muriel, the need of an education, an alert mind, clean living, and a bit of a culture."¹⁴ However, the experience in Washington D.C. intrigued Humphrey, but his fear of turning his back on his father and the family business stalled his pursuit of his education and Washington D.C.. Further in the letter, Hubert writes, "Maybe I am foolish to have such vain hopes and plans, but Bucky, I can see how some day, if you and I just apply ourselves and make up our minds to work for bigger things, how we can someday live here in Washington and probably. . . in Congress. Don't laugh at me, Muriel. Maybe it does sound rather egotistical and beyond reason but Muriel, I do know others have succeeded. Why haven't I a chance? You'll help me, I know. . . ."¹⁵

Personal issues in the life of the young couple continued to plague their aspirations. Muriel's mother passed away unexpectedly and her father unfortunately lost his business. The stress and strain on Hubert only got worse. The only way Hubert could see Muriel is if he hitchhiked one hundred and fifty miles on Saturday nights after his father's store closed. At age

¹³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 52.

¹⁴ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 53.

¹⁵ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 54.

twenty-five, Hubert was working without a salary at his father's store and often took money from the till to go on dates with Muriel. One of the most frequent of these dates was the Lampe's Pavilion where they would go and dance on Wednesday evenings.¹⁶ In September 1936, Hubert and Muriel were married. The wedding took place early in the early morning so his father could open up his shop on time.

Shortly after their marriage, Hubert received a salary from his father for the first time and Muriel took a job as a bookkeeper for a local power company.¹⁷ Muriel and Hubert had a series of serious conversations, but one in particular stood out the most. The topic was the possibility of returning to the University of Minnesota, which has been a lifelong dream of the now twenty-five year old Hubert. This dream slowly became a reality when Muriel started saving her seventy-five dollar a month salary. As Hubert and Muriel were working towards their goals of having Hubert return to school tensions grew within the Humphrey household. Once again, the family business was at the center of attention. Hubert's father was elected as a state representative and had to leave for Pierre. Hubert's brother Ralph, although capable of running the store was not qualified enough to fulfill prescriptions meaning Hubert had to stay for his father's business. Hubert's loyalty to his family and his father's business came to a halt once Muriel's patience grew thin.¹⁸ One evening at the Van Dyke household, Muriel said "If we don't do something, we can't live together."¹⁹ This single sentence changed Hubert's mind.

One evening at the Humphrey family shop, Hubert finally spoke his mind. After closing the drugstore, Hubert and his father went for a ride. The conversation in his father's car forever

¹⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 51.

¹⁷ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 52.

¹⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 50.

¹⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 53.

changed the young man's life. A conversation ensued and Hubert told his father that he did not want to peddle pills and that his father had noticed a change in the attitude of his son. His father was aggravated by his son's decision, but decided not to run for reelection or standing for another office, thus allowing Hubert to return to the university..²⁰ From this moment forward, Hubert began focusing on finishing his studies at the University of Minnesota, and by the fall of 1937, Muriel had saved a total of six hundred and seventy-five dollars. Their savings allowed Hubert to return to the University.

Minneapolis had only been a city for roughly sixty years before Hubert and Muriel moved there in 1937. Upon their arrival the city was in a state of tension due to economic struggles. This tension stemmed from the end of the World War I and the ongoing Great Depression. The economic decay of the city contributed to the once great lumber industry that stripped the North Woods away. Even the iron mines in the Iron Range were only operating at ten percent of their capacity. The opening of the Panama Canal made shipping by sea much cheaper. A ruling in 1922 from the Interstate Commerce Commission put Minneapolis' industries at disadvantage in freight rates, compared to manufacturers who shipped from the east.²¹ Minneapolis, prior to World War I, was the heart of the great farm region, but struggled to recuperate after the war years and only got worse during the Great Depression.

On the outskirts of the city is where primarily the middle class lived, many of whom were former merchants or white collar workers that retired before the economic unrest occurred. During the early years, Minneapolis was primarily a Republican city. In 1916, Tom Lowry, a utilities magnate, smashed a transit strike and kept wages lower than in most other cities. In

²⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 56.

²¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 61.

1908, George Dayton and Lowry formed the Citizens' Alliance for the purpose of preventing their employees from organizing. Throughout the 1920s, only about twenty-five thousand workers were unionized and almost all of them were conservative craft unions of the building trades.

Jim Hill, a supporter of the Democratic party and business man, completed the Great Northern Railway. Upon the completion of this rail system many Scandinavians settled on farms along the railroads. However, this did make a lot of the Minnesota farmers angry because they realized they were disadvantaged, in comparison to the city.²² These events, led to the creation of the Farmers Union. The Farmers Union understood the economic situations for the local farmers. Many farmers felt like they were robbed by Minnesota millers. Also, they paid them little for grain. But Minneapolis merchants shipped them machines, fuels, and processed feed at high prices.²³ Charles A. Lindbergh ran for governor of Minnesota in 1920. He ran for office under the Non-Partisan League and the Working People's Non-Partisan League. He lost and four years later, Floyd Olson, lost as well who ran under a unified Farm Labor movement.²⁴

Floyd Olson, was a skillful politician and had the support of many locals. As banks across the state struggled and farm prices fell, Olson came into office in 1930 as the head of the Farmer-Labor Party. With Olson in charge, the economic crisis for farmers began to change. The situation for farmers became so and they became so desperate they formed the Farm Holiday Association. These farmers demanded a moratorium on mortgage foreclosures. Governor Olson

²² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 60.

²³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 61-62.

²⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 64.

had to do something with so many farmers out of work. Previously, he talked about creating the Cooperative Commonwealth in Minnesota, but he was forced to take action immediately.²⁵

In St. Paul, violence was a primary concern. In Minneapolis, the Citizens Alliance found goons, spies, stool pigeons, detectives, and grand jury fixers to keep unions down.²⁶ In December 1933, a showdown between the businessmen and the Labor party occurred. The showdown turned into a war between the business owners and the workers. The employers consisted of the Pillsburys, Daytons, and the head of the Citizens Alliance, A.W. Strong. Labor's fight consisted of activists and the Dunne brothers, Ray was the most well-known.

In 1934, a subsidiary of Ford Motor Company bought the coal yard that Ray Dunne worked at. Dunne was fired because of his and his families' support of the Communist party. His firing caused Ray and his brother Miles to organize all of the coal workers under the banner of International Brotherhood of Teamsters. The organization had roughly eight hundred members. These workers worked forty to ninety hours a week and were often paid between twelve and eighteen dollars a week.²⁷ \ Washington's New Deal legislation sparked an interest in coal during the winter season. On February 7, 1933, five hundred drivers and helpers led by Ray Dunne boycotted their jobs because they wanted to be recognized for their hard work. The brothers demanded better working conditions, and better pay. After three days the employers gave into the demands of their workers, but this was only the beginning.²⁸

Minneapolis was a major center for distribution and the four thousand or so truck drivers essentially held the fate of the city in their hands. The Minneapolis Employers of Drivers and

²⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 69.

²⁶ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

²⁷ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

²⁸ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

Helpers was created shortly after the initial strike. The goal was for the employers to reject the demands of their current workers. Some of the demands requested for their workers were for a closed shop, shorter work hours, and a weekly pay of twenty-seven and a half dollars.²⁹ Three months after the coal workers' strike, the nearly six hundred truck drivers within the city started to strike. The tensions continued to mount and thirty police men and four picketers were hurt during the altercation on May 21.

With the shock of a potential bloody confrontation approaching Governor Olson won a truce by threatening to call out the National Guard. Collective bargaining began, but neither side wanted to talk to one another. Another conflict occurred on July, 17 as communication between the two sides halted. Picketers were marching to the market area where violence occurred again, this time leaving two innocent men killed.³⁰ By now Minneapolis was in complete chaos and the federal government proposed a minimum wage for the workers and they reluctantly accepted while the employers rejected their demands. This caused the government to hand down sanctions on employers for their lack of willingness to work with the employees.³¹

Minneapolis had changed during Humphrey's time away. When Hubert returned to campus the University of Minnesota was the third largest institution of higher education in the United States.³² Much like the city he returned to his experience on campus was much different. After a six-year absence he was married to a younger woman who dedicated all of her earnings for him to attend the university. Hubert knew that he needed to apply himself. Humphrey was eager to get through college as he signed up for twenty-one credits his first semester back on

²⁹ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

³⁰ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

³¹ DeGraff, John. 1981. *Labor's Turning Point*. St. Paul, MN: KTCA-TV.

³² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 65.

campus.³³ He noticed that the atmosphere on campus was completely different and reflected directly the tensions of the 1930s.³⁴

Hubert and Muriel rented a one-bedroom apartment and after a few months they began to realize that Muriel's savings would not last very long. Hubert ended up taking a part time job at Brown's campus drugstore.³⁵ Muriel, since she was not a student at the university set out to find a job as well. Hubert's first semester back he did not feel like he was intellectually engaged enough; however, this changed the ensuing semester as he took a class in American Constitutional Government, which was taught by a young professor named Evron Kirkpatrick. This course, Hubert often remembered, was one of the three most important parts of his life, the first being the Dakota dust bowl and the second being his father.³⁶ The class was about the basic fundamentals of the American government.

The impact of Dr. Kirkpatrick's class forever changed his life. During the class, Hubert reflected on the conversations he had at his father's store years earlier. He became very attentive and active in the classroom. Even after classes had ended for the day, Hubert spent time talking to his professor while reflecting upon his years at the drugstore. The same situation happened in his political theory class taught by Professor Benjamin Lippincott. Professor Lippincott was well known on campus for making students defend their stance during discussions. When Hubert was asked to do so, he would turn his time into a full blown speech and Professor Lippincott had to cut him off to give others a chance to talk.

³³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 67.

³⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 71.

³⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 72.

³⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 68.

Professor Kirkpatrick's class was tiny. During one of their class discussions Hubert and a school football player named Orville Freeman clashed during a classroom discussion. The discussion between the future colleagues covered the topic of European immigration movements into the United States.³⁷ The discussion quickly turned into a debate that Freeman acknowledged Humphrey had subsequently won. Their friendship developed rather quickly. Hubert lived just a few yards away from where the class met and often Humphrey, Freeman, and Professor Kirkpatrick went back to his apartment and talked about the daily topic. Humphrey was always prepared to talk politics whether inside the classroom or out. Sometimes the conversations did not make it back to his apartment, but outside on the steps leading to Burton Hall.³⁸ Often these conversations drew the attention of students passing by as they wanted to hear the young intellectuals converse.³⁹

During his time at the University of Minnesota he met P. Kenneth McPherson. The two later ran against each other for the Senate, McPherson as a conservative republican. The two were debate partners. Orville Freeman, himself a future governor and cabinet member, did not like McPherson and he never stopped by when the two were working on a debate. By the time Humphrey arrived at the University of Minnesota for his second stint Floyd Olson had died from stomach cancer.⁴⁰ Shortly after his death, the Farmer-Labor Party began to break up. Many people in Minnesota began talking about a young Republican named Harold Stassen. Much of Minnesota considered themselves to be Republican, and Humphrey felt out of place since he had voted twice for Roosevelt and idolized his liberalism while living in South Dakota.

³⁷ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 68.

³⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 69.

³⁹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 71.

⁴⁰ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 84.

In Professor Lippincott's class he began to develop his political identity on the campus. Lippincott stated during a classroom discussion Humphrey was not dogmatic about certain issues like most of the young Democrats in the classroom. Rather, he tended to have the ability to meet halfway with the Republicans in the classroom during discussion. Humphrey's ability to compromise helped him greatly during his political career. Lippincott believed that he was a liberal for not focusing primarily on the poor black population of Minnesota, but the entire poor population.⁴¹ During most of Humphrey's senior year of college, he jumped from one college to another parting in every debate possible as a member of the schools debate team. Humphrey did not necessarily do this to build his reputation, but instead did it for the money since he and his wife were expecting their first child. From the events, Humphrey won the Forensic Medal and the William Jennings Bryan prize for the best political science essay.⁴² He lost an on-campus debate, but this failure was left overshadowed by the birth of his first child Nancy on February 27, 1939.⁴³

Humphrey was aware that a bachelor's degree in political science did not do much for him since he was young, inexperienced, and wanted to become an academic, so he set his eyes on graduate school. Humphrey felt this way since he was inexperienced politically. Muriel had urged him to become an academic. Muriel persuaded him to pursue his doctorate and a career as a professor. Humphrey had the chance to attend some universities in the Midwest, but he chose Louisiana State University. Humphrey had never been to the South. However, his former professor Evron Kirkpatrick played a major role in getting him into LSU.⁴⁴ Charles Hyneman

⁴¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 70.

⁴² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 70.

⁴³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 71.

⁴⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 74.

was Kirkpatrick's mentor a few years earlier and was the chair of LSU's political science department. Humphrey was awarded a fellowship of four hundred and fifty dollars. Humphrey was essentially poor, and had a wife and child to take care of when the offer was made. Humphrey knew he needed to accept.

Humphrey left Baton Rouge alone while he tried to find somewhere to live while Muriel and young Nancy waited in South Dakota. He eventually found an apartment on Highland Road. Rent cost thirty five dollars a month, and the train ride from South Dakota to Louisiana cost him a large portion of his salary. Muriel had to get a job to help the young family afford their apartment; she did so at the Louisiana State University's Department of Government as a typist.

Humphrey felt that the political atmosphere of Louisiana and LSU was a bit exotic. Shortly before Humphrey arrived in Louisiana Huey Long was assassinated in 1935. Humphrey who had a clear fascination with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was intrigued by Huey Long and his family.⁴⁵

The campus lifestyle at LSU differed drastically from the University of Minnesota. Almost daily bands played music on campus. Hubert, found campus politics to amuse him as they were so enthusiastic and ran just like major elections. The year before his arrival at LSU, Russell Long, the son of Huey Long won the student government association presidency. He did not express any interests in campus politics, but the contrary was true for state politics. Everything he witnessed in the state legislature, during his time at LSU began to make him consider eventually running for political office.⁴⁶ Some of the things that stood out the most to

⁴⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 80.

⁴⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 80.

him that actually aided him during his own time in the senate was the viciousness of Southern politics.

Humphrey admired Long for his commitment of trying to change the socioeconomic structures of Louisiana. The political climate of the state had been dominated by robber barons in oil, natural gas, and timber. They payed little in taxes. Louisiana had very few hospitals, inadequate schools, no paved roads, and very few gravel roads. Humphrey describes Long as having the tongue of a demagogue, but the heart of a compassionate man.⁴⁷ By the time of his assassination,, Long had transformed LSU from being a land grant cow college into a respected Southern university.⁴⁸ Long had the campus reconstructed and moved the campus away from the capitol while making the rich pay for it. This was the first time in Louisiana history that the industries whose fortunes long dominated the political landscape of the state had to pay their share of taxes.⁴⁹

Not only did Humphrey learn a lot about the successes of Huey Long while in Louisiana, but he also began to become keenly aware of the socioeconomic strife plaguing Southern African Americans.⁵⁰ Humphrey grew up as a white liberal in South Dakota, , and he did not know black Americans. Humphrey stated,” that he had never truly been aware of African American oppression before his experience in Louisiana.”⁵¹ The terrible relationship between the two races changed his mindset once he got into the public life and tried to fix race relations in the North and Midwest once he did get into office. One instance that particularly stood out to Humphrey

⁴⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 81.

⁴⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 81.

⁴⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 81.

⁵⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 81.

⁵¹ Mann, Robert. "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." Nola.com. June 23, 2014. Accessed June 13, 2018.

https://www.nola.com/opinions/2014/06/hubert_humphreys_year_in_baton.html.

was when he was having a conversation with one of his classmates. He was discussing race relations in the South with one of his classmates who recalled how he was raised by one of his family's workers that he called "mammy."⁵² However, Humphrey was shocked when he was told the classmate did not like blacks despite his upbringing.⁵³

Humphrey, also, was dismayed with what he saw as a student at LSU. He witnessed firsthand the socioeconomic differences between whites and blacks in the South.⁵⁴ Humphrey recalled seeing the neatly painted homes of the whites, the unpainted shacks of the blacks, the neatly mowed lawns of the whites, and the open sewage ditches in black neighborhoods.⁵⁵ Upon discovery of the white and colored signs of the South, Humphrey felt that it was ridiculous, a waste of money and illogical. Witnessing these signs challenged Humphrey's thinking of how anyone could believe this was acceptable. He also began questioning the racial prejudice of the North.⁵⁶ Despite spending only one year in Louisiana his experiences there contributed directly to him pursuing civil rights throughout his career.

He devoted himself to his coursework, however, at the end of the year he did not know if he would finish. He went to chair of his department and declared he was not going to finish his master's degree. He felt like giving up due to the dispute with his direct advisor Alex Dispat. Dispat himself was working on his advanced degree at Harvard. The two butted heads over his

⁵² Mann, "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." 2014.

⁵³ Mann, "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." 2014.

⁵⁴ Mann, "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." 2014.

⁵⁵ Mann, "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." 2014.

⁵⁶ Mann, "Hubert Humphrey's Year in Baton Rouge and How It Helped Shape Our Civil Rights Laws." 2014.

thesis. Humphrey's thesis was titled the *Political Philosophy of the New Deal*.⁵⁷ However, Dispat thought his views of the New Deal were less than objective. Humphrey considered his views as fair, purpose, and scholarly.⁵⁸ Once word reached Humphrey that Dispat was leaving the university to finish his degree at Harvard he was happy. With Evron Kirkpatrick's former mentor now in charge of his thesis he had new hope that he would finish his degree. Charles Hyneman, Robert Harris, and Norton Long, no relation to Huey Long, were now in charge of his oral defense.⁵⁹

In June 1940, he defended his thesis. Everything was going well, and his committee believed he was more prepared for a career politics rather than a career in the Academy. During the defense Norton Long said to Humphrey, "I believe I will have to fail you for this examination. If we give you a degree you will likely begin teaching at the university. If I fail you then you will more than likely start your political career."⁶⁰ The committee then began to laugh as they played the joke on Humphrey. Humphrey passed and received his master's degree.

These three men were right, but only partially as Humphrey did become a college professor for a few years, but his everlasting relationship with these men did play a role in him eventually running for public office. In June 1940, Humphrey returned to Minnesota, but this time to work on his doctorate. The everlasting impact of the words from his thesis committee did stick with him when he returned to the University of Minnesota and reunited him with his former professor Evron Kirkpatrick, who had a long standing relationship with his advisor at LSU.

⁵⁷Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 85.

⁵⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 85.

⁵⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 86.

⁶⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 87.

CHAPTER 3

GRASPING THE NATION'S CONSCIENCE

Upon graduating from Louisiana State University with his master's degree, Humphrey faced a tough decision. Choosing between Princeton University and the University of Minnesota was a tough for the now twenty nine year old. Humphrey received a scholarship from Princeton and the University of Minnesota offered him six hundred dollars a year through a teaching assistantship. Humphrey desperately wanted to attend Princeton as it was home of former president Woodrow Wilson, someone he and his father admired.⁶¹ However, Humphrey lacked sufficient financial backing and he feared moving so far away from home to a more expensive region of the country with his wife and child. However, after his former advisor at the University of Minnesota, Evron Kirkpatrick secured a summer job at the Works Progress Administration, WPA, in Duluth, Minnesota the decision was clear for Humphrey.

Humphrey's first job since returning to Minnesota consisted of teaching unemployed teachers how to run adult educational programs. At the start of the fall term, Muriel and his daughter Nancy joined him in Minnesota, allowing Humphrey to save money. Once the new semester began he was faced with another tough decision. Upon starting his doctoral program he received an offered a full time position as the director of the Twin Cities Worker Education program.⁶² Financially desperate Humphrey accepted the position. Aware of the work required for this position Humphrey decided to postpone writing his doctoral dissertation despite the pleas of his advisers.

⁶¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 90.

⁶² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 92.

His decision to accept a job as the director of the Twin Cities branch laid out a future launching pad for his political career. His first task consisted of evaluating teachers and how often they met with their classes. He gave the teachers six weeks to develop a fulltime schedule and fired a number of teachers that did not obey his orders.⁶³ Many people within the WPA were astonished that someone actually had the guts to improve adult education programs.⁶⁴ Humphrey did so despite potential backlash from his bosses and the pleas and complaints of the newly unemployed teachers.

With his new directorship Humphrey had to travel quite a bit and upon some of his visits he noticed a few things that he wished to fix at the start of his public service career. One of the first instances that drew Humphrey's attention was that of mine workers in Minnesota's Iron Range. The Iron Range stretches across Lake Superior and became essential to Minnesota's economy for much of the twentieth century. He described the living and working conditions of the mine workers as grim. However, working conditions elsewhere were equally as treacherous. Lumberjacks in the most Northern regions of the state and manufacturing plants in the Twin Cities were equally as poor.⁶⁵ Humphrey's next action forever played a pivotal role in his career in public service. He urged union members of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), labor became his greatest ally, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) to create new programs about the education in the workforce.

⁶³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 115.

⁶⁴ Hubert Humphrey Papers Mayoral Files. Box. 6. Folder 5. Page 44.

⁶⁵ Offner, Arnold A. *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018), 17.

Soon Humphrey received another promotion for his hard work. However, by 1943, he was forced to close operations of the Workers Education Program since most of the young people in the courses were being drafted to serve in World War II, voluntarily enlisted for service, or decided to take jobs in the booming wartime manufacturing businesses. At this time he was building a reputation as a dynamic public speaker that foreshadowed his future career as a senator.⁶⁶

Despite enjoying his time as a close space public speaker Humphrey wanted to enlist in the military. Humphrey registered for the initial draft in 1940, but was classified as 3A since he was a father. 3A is a hardship deferment for someone who's service might make it difficult upon his family. In June 1942, Muriel gave birth to a second child Hubert Horatio Humphrey III, or Skip Humphrey, and the possibility of military service seemed even more unlikely. Shortly after Muriel's father joined the household. He was deathly ill. The lack military service haunted his political career. Many of Humphrey's university friends believed he should enter politics, but Democrats had little to no control in state politics, let alone a liberal.⁶⁷

The opening for the mayor of Minneapolis intrigued Humphrey. The Mayor of Minneapolis is a nonpartisan office. It was often occupied by a Republican. This office had little real power, which was reserved for the city council. Marvin L. Kline, the current mayor, was lackluster and had very little support from labor and business groups.⁶⁸ Kline also did not show any intentions of addressing the crime and corruption running rampant throughout the city's nightlife. One of the first supporters of Humphrey was Dr. Walter H. Judd. In 1942, Judd upset

⁶⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 97.

⁶⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 97.

⁶⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 18.

Oscar Youngdahl for the fifth congressional district of Minnesota. Most of his district consisted of the majority of Minneapolis and many of the small towns to the west. Upon Judd's victory Humphrey was of the first to congratulate him.⁶⁹ Humphrey a political scientist by training, clicked with Judd. They discussed foreign policy and politics. The conversation was a success and Judd put him in contact with important and influential people. The supporters consisted of the executive editor of the *Minneapolis Star Journal*, Gideon Seymour, and the senior executive of General Mills Ronald Welch. The two supporters agreed to pay the ten dollar filing fee and endorse Humphrey with six hundred dollars for campaign expenses.⁷⁰

Despite being a political scientist by training Humphrey was not very well rounded in municipal politics. Lacking of sufficient financial backing, writing his doctoral dissertation and not being well known were the main worries of the thirty one year old. His advisor Evron Kirkpatrick, his university friend Herbert McClosky, and Judge Vincent Day, all encouraged him to pursue the office. To Humphrey, the city of Minneapolis had two different identities. During the daytime Minneapolis was a vibrant city for business. By night Minneapolis was a hotbed of violent labor disputes, illegal gambling, prostitution, and home to organized crime. Minneapolis was also full of corruption.⁷¹

Another one of Humphrey's university colleagues encouraged him to pursue the mayoral office. Arthur Naftalin, who recently returned to the university life to continue his own studies worked for a few years as a news reporter in Minneapolis. During a discussion Humphrey stated

⁶⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 101.

⁷⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 102.

⁷¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 22.

his worries about the skyrocketing crime rates within the city, and his fear of being shot while campaigning when addressing crime rates. Naftalin, only confirmed his fears.⁷²

During a Sunday morning walk in April 1943, Humphrey ran into Judge Day and George Phillips and George E. Murk.. The three men conversed and, thanks to the efforts of Judge Day, they offered Humphrey AFL support if he ran. Labor became Humphrey's biggest ally going forward. Humphrey finally felt he had sufficient support to place his name into the primary. Humphrey submitted his filing fee just nineteen days before the application's deadline.⁷³ From this moment onward Humphrey displayed an energetic charisma that defined the entirety of his public career. His closest friends and colleagues transitioned along with Humphrey into the realm of politics. An early tactic for the Humphrey campaign was designed by Naftalin, he signed Humphrey up for four weekly radio interviews to help bring the much needed name recognition.⁷⁴

Anywhere that had a gathering Humphrey was there to campaign during his first run for office. One of his first points he addressed was the poor performance of the current mayor Kline. Some of the main objectives for the campaign focused on crime and corruption in Minneapolis, addressing the issue of workplace grievances, postwar expansion of housing and economic development for the city, and reformation of the corrupt police force.

Ultimately, Humphrey fell short in his first push for a public office position. Kline won reelection by a vote of 60,075 to Humphrey's 54,350.⁷⁵ Despite the loss, the local newspapers

⁷² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 108.

⁷³ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 21.

⁷⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 108-109

⁷⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 110.

declared Humphrey as the new star. He had displayed his ability as a brilliant campaigner.⁷⁶

Humphrey looked for new ways to gain political support. He and his father believed he needed to serve in the military to aid in bolstering his respectability. Humphrey never successfully enlisted in the military, but he made numerous efforts.

Upon applying for a Naval Reserve officer commission position he was rejected. Humphrey again immediately tried enlisting as a pharmacist's mate or an apprentice seaman, but he also fell short. Humphrey was color blind, had a double hernia and had scars on his lungs possibly from drinking unpasteurized tuberculosis milk.⁷⁷ In July 1944, Humphrey was classified as 1A limited and he began the whole process over again. He was deferred once again since he had a wife and three children.⁷⁸ The new classification meant Humphrey could serve in the military, but he could not see combat. The Army declared it was too expensive to draft people that had dependents. After the Battle of the Bulge, Humphrey again was classified as 1A limited and he was rejected. Despite his plea to the recruiters at Fort Snelling he was deferred. His picture in full military fatigue had already appeared in the local newspaper and he believed that image would hurt his career. Humphrey stated, "This picture will haunt me the rest of my life."⁷⁹ Which is true for his Presidential Campaigns in 1960 and 1968.

Despite not being selected to serve in the military Humphrey was in charge of running the Truman-Roosevelt campaign in Minnesota. Also, he was in charge of running the campaign for the first Democratic Farmer-Labor candidate for governor, Byron G. Allen.⁸⁰ During the

⁷⁶ Hubert Humphrey Mayor Files Box 3. Folder 4. page 6.

⁷⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 118.

⁷⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 118.

⁷⁹ Mayors Files Box 1. Folder 2. Page 113.

⁸⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 120.

1944 Presidential Campaign the DFL party strongly supported Henry Wallace. He was a Midwesterner who understood the importance of rebuilding the agriculture of the Midwest. However, during the summer of 1944 the DNC leaders decided to dump Wallace from the ticket. The decision to make Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman as the running mate for Roosevelt infuriated the DFL. Senator Harry Truman was relatively unknown to the DFL party. In late 1944, the DFL held a campaign luncheon at the Dyckman Hotel where hundreds of people showed their support for Truman. This was the first time much of the DFL had heard from or talked privately with Truman, and it became apparent to most of the DFL that he was an avid New Dealer.⁸¹ Despite being accepted by the newly formed DFL no one envisioned him as a potential president. With the help of Humphrey the Roosevelt-Truman ticket won the state of Minnesota by nearly 82,000 votes despite the efforts of Republicans Thomas Dewey and John Bricker.⁸²

While campaigning for the Roosevelt-Truman ticket Humphrey also focused on understanding how the Minneapolis's local government worked. He did so by examining the people behind the power structure that made the government work. To figure out the power structure Humphrey payed more attention to the local news. This tactic allowed him to understand who the most influential people in local politics were so he could build a relationship with them. Humphrey spent time visiting with businessmen, bankers, publishers and built a long lasting relationship with the labor movement.⁸³ Early in 1945, Humphrey felt better prepared for a second campaign for mayor, realizing his first campaign only received help from a few people.

⁸¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 121.

⁸² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 27.

⁸³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 123.

By 1945, he had improved his support geographically, ideologically, and socially.⁸⁴ Humphrey was better informed as to how he needed to improve the city.

From the start of his second campaign for mayor he had overwhelming support. Two men that helped Humphrey tremendously during his second campaign were George Phillips and Robert Wishart.⁸⁵ Phillips ran the United Labor Committee For Political Action which had already shown support for Roosevelt. Wishart was the head of the Minnesota Brotherhood of Railroads and was the head of the Hennepin CIO council, but most importantly Wishart also ran the Hennepin DFL party.⁸⁶ The UCL sought to play a major role in local politics and supported Humphrey early in 1945 by contributing a large amount of money. It also gained support of volunteers to distribute pamphlets supporting Humphrey, and produced lawn signs to aid his second campaign. The Democratic National Committee gave Humphrey some additional funding during his second campaign as well. Humphrey's single largest campaign contribution came from his father. The elder Humphrey donated two hundred dollars to his sons campaign.⁸⁷

Humphrey continually crisscrossed the city searching for speaking opportunities and ways to get his name in the local newspaper and on the radio. This tactic helped him. By 1945, Minneapolis was searching itself in the wake of World War II. The current administration was filled with corruption. The disarray from the current administration helped Humphrey in many ways. One, he was a young candidate who consistently proposed new ideas. Two, he did not

⁸⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 122.

⁸⁵ Haynes, John Earl. *Dubious Alliance: The Making of Minnesota's DFL Party* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 119.

⁸⁶ Offner, Hubert Humphrey: *The Conscience of the Country*, 28.

⁸⁷ Offner, Hubert Humphrey: *The Conscience of the Country*, 31.

have any form of corruption in his political career. And, three, he was youthful and charismatic.⁸⁸

The support of labor was important to Humphrey and his career, but he also drew interest from some of the major local businesses. John Cowles owner of the *Star Journal, the Morning Tribune, and Times* was interested in the young hopeful candidate. Cowles supported Humphrey since he declared he would not pledge his allegiance to any specific group, rather he planned to focus on cleaning up the cities gambling, illegal liquor sales, and prostitution that fed off of the corrupt police department.⁸⁹ Cowles aided Humphrey in appealing to some of the other major leaders in the city. Most notably Cowles introduced Humphrey to John Pillsbury, Bradshaw Mintener, and Lucie Sprague. Humphrey also gained support from the cities minorities after a Jewish kid was beaten up and Mayor Kline responded by only saying he will do whatever it takes to prevent future incidents from happening. Humphrey countered his comments by saying the response was only superficial and as a city they needed to establish a human rights commission and a Fair Employment Practices Committee.⁹⁰ As an avid New Dealer Humphrey, borrowed this idea from President Roosevelt. FDR promised fair employment opportunities for African Americans.

Of all of the contributors to his second campaign, Fred Gates stood out the most. Humphrey met Gates during his first campaign, but he was weary of the young candidate and refused to give his support. Gates knew the ins-and-outs of the corruption plaguing the city. However, Gates did not take Humphrey seriously during his first pursuit for public office. Gates

⁸⁸ Haynes, *Dubious Alliance: The Making of Minnesota's DFL Party*. 119.

⁸⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 33.

⁹⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 29.

viewed him as a candidate who just showed flashes of potential. On the eve of the 1945 election the two men had a conversation that gained Humphrey a political friend for the rest of his career.⁹¹ Gates was a businessman as he owned a local penny arcade. He knew of the payoffs and protection rackets and wanted Humphrey's reassurance that he planned to cleanse the city of the corruption.⁹² Once Humphrey agreed he gained the constant support of Gates until his death in 1971. In 1945, Gates encouraged Humphrey to use the campaign slogan "Accentuate the Positive, and Eliminate the Negative."⁹³ The words came from a relatively new hit song of the era by Bing Crosby. Humphrey's main focus consisted of local government reform, law and order, and preparation for postwar prosperity in terms of housing, schools, and urban development. Humphrey won the final vote on June 11 by to nearly sixty-one percent of the votes and carrying every ward within the city besides one.

On July 2, 1945, at age thirty-four, Humphrey became the youngest mayor in the history of Minneapolis. Humphrey got to work on trying to find a new police chief. The former police chief did not seem to be concerned about the corruption taking place within the city. Humphrey wanted someone who would address organized crime, enforce the laws, and bring down the high rate of violent crime.⁹⁴ During Mayor Kline's administration in 1944 there were 397 total arrests, 1739 total investigations, 1574 for gambling, liquor, and vice, but only 97 were arrested.⁹⁵ Humphrey decided on nominating his former neighbor and FBI trainee Edwin Ryan as the head of his police department.

⁹¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 132.

⁹² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 133.

⁹³ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Box 1. Folder 1. page 73.

⁹⁴ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Box 1. Folder 1. Page 73.

⁹⁵ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Law Enforcement. Folder 2 page 26.

During his first year, Humphrey primarily focused on law enforcement. Despite working all day, Humphrey would find a squad car and ride around the city at night to learn about the cities' nightlife. He would also visit city hall to learn how the calls were being handled. Humphrey had little to no experience with such activities. The only thing he really knew about was poverty during his upbringing in South Dakota and a distinctively different poorness for blacks in Louisiana. Previous Minneapolis mayors never interfered with the livelihood of the people causing the corruption within the city.⁹⁶ One night after giving a speech Humphrey had a police officer take him home. The police officer walked Humphrey to the door. Humphrey waved to the police officer and as he was entering his house he was shot at three times. All three bullets missed the mayor. The attack on Humphrey was in retaliation for his effort to clean up the city. The most corrupt group in Minneapolis, the Syndicate, likely tried to stop the mayor from continuing his purge of the city.⁹⁷ However, Humphrey was never sure who fired the bullet.

From time to time Humphrey would stay at central headquarters until shift change at midnight. Humphrey attended the shift change to make sure no foul activity was occurring. He knew that there are many ways that police work can turn into crime and corruption. He knew that sometimes it was not just a major issue that would get someone in trouble. People would come in and try and talk the police out of arresting someone saying "they have a good job, they have a good family, and so on."⁹⁸ Humphrey intended for the law to be carried out to his standard not the old standard. As mayor he realized a correlation between crime and corruption and he knew if he shrugged his shoulders on an issue then someone else will do the same.

⁹⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 65.

⁹⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 144.

⁹⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 66.

Humphrey simply aimed to change the attitudes of the police department. For years the police let the corruption occur. The Syndicate held a number of illegal liquor licenses and aided in getting many small businesses shut down. One notable instance of this comes from the events that transpired at the 620 Club, down the road from Humphrey's house. The police set up the club by making a mature looking boy walk into the club and buy a drink.⁹⁹ The bar was shut down as a result and the bartender was arrested on the spot. When Humphrey received word of what happened he contacted the police officer and informed him that, "I am Humphrey, not Hitler. We do not use that kind of tactic."¹⁰⁰ As a result Humphrey had the charges dropped and the club reopened. However, other ways of intimidation were harder to get rid of. Police departments all over the nation always have officers who abuse minorities. This issue has never fully been solved, but in the 1940s not many people were addressing the problem or even considering to find a solution.¹⁰¹ In Minneapolis, African Americans, Native Americans, and Jews all dealt with this issue.

As mayor Humphrey tried to put an end to this bigotry. He contacted the University of Minnesota's Center of Continuation of Study to set up a course in human relations.¹⁰² Humphrey made this a required class for all police officers. Humphrey tried to establish an environment that would put an end to the prejudice within the city. Early in his political career Humphrey helped establish a Fair Employment Practice Commission in Minneapolis. Humphrey did this after an instance when a police officer called suspect a "dirty Jew."¹⁰³ As a result Humphrey suspended the officer without pay. He tried even more to stop the abuse of African Americans, but he did

⁹⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 66.

¹⁰⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 67.

¹⁰¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 115.

¹⁰² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 140.

¹⁰³ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 67.

not have much success. The efforts of Ryan and Humphrey helped decrease the number of illegal liquor licenses and aided in the decline of illegal operations. From 1946-1949 homicides declined from ten to three a year and aggravated assaults dropped from forty six to twenty three.¹⁰⁴ Mayor Humphrey and Officer Ryan helped Minneapolis become a safer city.

During his campaign Humphrey proposed the idea of postwar housing. Housing shortage in Minneapolis became evident as World War II veterans returned home. The city needed nearly nine thousand more homes to meet its goal. When Humphrey was campaigning he traveled to New York and Chicago to learn how major American cities were handling the issue. To the dismay of contractors who wanted to build houses that were too expensive for returning veterans, Humphrey established a nonprofit organization called the Minneapolis Veterans Trailer Housing, Inc. This organization borrowed thirty thousand dollars from Minneapolis' American Red Cross to purchase 107 trailers that were vacant in Ohio.¹⁰⁵ The debt was paid for by the people renting the trailers. Also, Humphrey established a "Shelter-A-Vet" organization that encouraged people to open their homes for veterans.¹⁰⁶ This act helped house nearly three thousand, or one third, of the presumed returning nine thousand veterans. Furthermore, Humphrey helped secure nearly four hundred more trailers for students that planned to attend the University of Minnesota.¹⁰⁷ Unfortunately, Humphrey was not able to aide all of the returning veterans. Ultimately, by that time many of the prominent figures in the city left for the suburbs causing an economic strain on the city due to the lack of funding from taxes. This is due to White Flight as mas minorities were moving to the major cities many rich people moved to the suburbs.

¹⁰⁴ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Law Enforcement. Box 3. Folder 4. page 41.

¹⁰⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 32.

¹⁰⁶ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Housing. Folder 3. 14.

¹⁰⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 32.

Humphrey, also played a major role in establishing better labor-management relationships. Minneapolis always struggled with this issue. Since his first campaign for the mayor's office he always had the support of labor. He was well aware of the police departments antilabor politics. He informed the police to never intervene in a labor strike "as any dummy can break a picket line with police force, but it takes some brains to come to an agreement between parties."¹⁰⁸ During his time as mayor police never interfered in a strike. However, Humphrey did intervene in labor issues of utmost importance. When picketers threatened to close all ten of the local hospitals that "these are not just beer parlors or candy factories. These are hospitals where people are really needing help and your family could be dying."¹⁰⁹ As a result a settlement was reached. He again showed his quick wit when in 1947 Bell telephone workers engaged in illegal picketing. As his protocol Humphrey did not let the police interfere. With supervisors sleeping in their offices Humphrey's wit came into play again. He declared, "if you want to run a hotel, then you will need to get a license."¹¹⁰ Humphrey always supported labor, but and he was also well respected by many of the major companies in the city. His ability to seek and maintain peace kept him on good terms with major businesses only if he did not seek a higher office than mayor.¹¹¹

One issue that really intrigued Humphrey was discrimination within the city. African Americans made up roughly one percent of the total population. Jews consisted of only five percent.¹¹² Very few African Americans owned their own businesses, and many of them struggled to find jobs. Often times they were excluded from unions and were denied lodging at

¹⁰⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 32.

¹⁰⁹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Labor Folder 3 Page 8.

¹¹⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 33.

¹¹¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 157.

¹¹² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 34.

hotels and eating at some restaurants. Jews faced similar issues, but they had it a little bit better. Jews had to own their own business to have a job.¹¹³ In January 1947, Humphrey passed a Fair Employment Practices ordinance. Minneapolis was the third city to do so following Chicago and Milwaukee. This ordinance aimed to put an end to discrimination in hiring, firing, promotion, and compensation.¹¹⁴ If you did not abide by the law you were fined one thousand dollars or put in jail for ninety days. However, the FEP did not have much success as only twenty African Americans were hired. This number was not much less than St. Paul who did not have a FEP. Humphrey's last step towards desegregation consisted of bowling alleys. His objective was to first desegregate in Minneapolis and then nationwide.¹¹⁵ Overall, Humphrey's time as mayor was built off of a number of New Deal ideals. As Humphrey begins to address the issue of desegregation and civil rights Humphrey for the first time in his political career starts to look at the national landscape. Humphrey during his first term focused primarily on domestic issues and cleansing Minneapolis of its reputation as a crime city. By 1948, Humphrey begins to change his attention to a more national approach by address civil rights first locally, but then he changes his intentions to a more national approach.¹¹⁶

On July 13, 1948, the thirty-seven year old mayor faced a complicated decision. Humphrey tried pressing the issue of civil rights by calling for bowling alleys to desegregate. The night before the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia Humphrey seemed off, disturbed by his desire to address the issue of civil rights. He spent the majority of his day talking with fellow Democrats and DFL members about the issue. Upon speaking to his father,

¹¹³ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 34.

¹¹⁴ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Mayors Files Folder 4. 19.

¹¹⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 35.

¹¹⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 168.

he was told that he would at least get the six votes from South Dakota if he were to address the issue on the national platform. However, Humphrey was unproven and only been mayor for four years and just got nominated to the Senate. Conversations with his longtime colleague Orville Freeman also helped. Overnight, Humphrey prepared a speech that forever changed the Democratic Party. Only July 14, 1948 despite running off of hardly any sleep Humphrey delivered his speech that caused several Southern Democrats to walk out of the Democratic National Convention.¹¹⁷ He called upon all Democrats.

“My friends, to those who say that we are rushing this issue of civil rights, I say to them we are one hundred and seventy two years late. To those who say that this civil rights program is an infringement on states’ rights, I say this: The time has arrived in America for the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states' rights and to walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights. People human beings this is the issue of the twentieth century. People of all kinds all sorts of people and these people are looking to America for leadership, and they’re looking to America for precept and example.”¹¹⁸

His speech called for the nation to get out of the shadows of state’s rights and walk for rightly into the bright sun shine of human rights. If the speech did not go well the nervous young Senate nominee would have committed career suicide.

¹¹⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 171.

¹¹⁸ Humphrey, Hubert H., and Paula Wilson. *The Civil Rights Rhetoric of Hubert H. Humphrey: 1948-1964*, (Lanham: Univ. Press of America, 1996), 16-17.

CHAPTER 4

HUMPHREY'S FIRST YEARS IN THE SENATE

Humphrey's speech during the 1948 Democratic National Convention won him the respect of many Democrats, but one stood out the most, President Truman, who became a Humphrey supporter. Truman declared on July 26 he would hold a special meeting to discuss the civil rights plank going forward in hopes of being elected in November. Humphrey was recognized as the savior of the convention for making such a bold declaration.¹¹⁹ He accredited "Boss" Flynn for encouraging him to make the speech. Humphrey's speech was the conscience of the convention.¹²⁰ Flynn was a close associate of late President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and played a significant role in getting President Truman elected in both of his campaigns for the White House.

Humphrey's civil rights speech made the national Democratic Party take notice. They were relying on him to win one of the most desired senatorial races in the nation.¹²¹ Upon returning to the Minneapolis train station Humphrey was met with cheers from many citizens referring to him as the "Champion of Human Rights." Once again Humphrey gave Truman credit for passing the civil rights plank while downplaying his convention speech. However, Humphrey did not receive much respect from the Southern states. The Southern Democratic party nominated J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and J. Fielding Wright as the head of their newly created State's Rights Party. The newly created party became known as the "Dixiecrats." They sought to punish Democrats for their support of civil rights. The agenda of the States'

¹¹⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 193.

¹²⁰ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 100.

¹²¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 101.

Rights Party consisted of “the segregation of the races and the racial integrity of each race.”¹²² Their goal was to replace Truman and Alben Barkley on their ballots with Strom Thurmond. However, their strongest supporters were in the deep South such as Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and South Carolina.

Humphrey was ready for his first senatorial race. Humphrey challenged a relatively unknown James Shields for the nomination. Shields, declared that Humphrey was “too much talk and not enough action,” and a tool of Wall Street that will turn on labor once elected.¹²³ However, on September 14, 1948, Humphrey defeated Shields by a vote of 200,000 to 26,925. Humphrey won all eighty-seven counties in Minnesota. Despite dominating the other parties in the election the Popular Front candidates were able to get Henry Wallace’s name on the ballot in Minnesota for the ensuing presidential election. Popular Fronts were a variety of groups that consist of leftist and centrist and are very broad in their presentation. Wallace was the left wing Progressive Party nominee in 1948. Despite all of this Wallace still supported Humphrey over Joseph Ball for the Senate.

Humphrey’s longtime friend from his first stint in college, Orville Freeman, ran his campaign for him. Freeman did all of the ground work such as examining press releases, sending people to the rural districts, and building a closer relationship to national and state labor organizations.¹²⁴ Humphrey’s first press release came on August 5 and he called for a more liberal approach on domestic issues. His plan put pressure on the federal government to improve the inconsistent economy and to put more pressure on human and civil rights especially for the

¹²²Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 63.

¹²³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 84.

¹²⁴ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 62.

African American community. According to Humphrey, he was aware that if a Republican took office in 1948, it might cause a threat to the economic viability of African Americans and Farmers.¹²⁵ He believed that the Marshall Plan would save America as it was under attack from the left and the right. The Marshall plan gave money to Western Europe so they could rebuild their cities after World War II. The United States hoped to remove trade barriers, modernize their industry and prevent the spread of communism.

Humphrey began his campaign as the underdog, but quickly realized the flaws in Ball's weaknesses. The owners of the major newspapers in Minneapolis opposed Humphrey's campaign despite supporting prior when he was mayor. Minnesota has not had a Democratic Senator since Reconstruction and the Knowles family, owners of the local newspapers, did not want to see Humphrey on a national platform representing their state. Ball was a leading internationalist. This ruined his relationship with rural farmers, and many Republican's became weary of him as he supported Roosevelt instead of Dewey during the 1944 Presidential election. Ball further tarnished his reputation by not supporting the Marshall plan, as he was one of seventeen Senators to reject the idea. His response was that the Marshall plan did not move Europe closer to economic self-sufficiency. Furthermore, Ball supported the Taft-Hartley Bill which made his defeat a priority by the major local unions.¹²⁶

Humphrey during his campaign went everywhere to speak. Some of his speaking engagements occurred in the back of a pickup truck with a microphone in hand, carnivals, and townhalls eating hot dogs and shaking every hand he could. Humphrey took the approach of not

¹²⁵ Haynes, John Earl. "Farm Coops and the Election of Hubert Humphrey to the Senate." *Agricultural History* 57, no. 2 (1983): 201-11. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3743156>.

¹²⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 202.

trying to exploit nationalities, ethnic or religious beliefs. On numerous occasions he compared campaigning to running a drugstore as it is important to express an interest in people. In total, Humphrey drove nearly thirty one thousand miles and gave over seven hundred speeches during his campaign for the Senate.¹²⁷

Much of Humphrey's support for Senate came from familiar faces from his last campaign. Smaile Chatek, aided in bringing in support from the Iron Range miners, and steel workers. Many of these men supported Henry Wallace, and to a similar affect in Duluth many Wallace supporters approved of a Humphrey political action committee. Robert Wishart, who supported Humphrey since his pursuit of the mayoral position provided a tie breaking vote to gain support from the Central Labor Union. Jewish citizens who supported Humphrey since 1944 also gave him sufficient backing. On Election Day 1948, Humphrey won the election with nearly sixty percent of the vote.

In December 1948, Humphrey set out for Washington D.C. with his close friend Fred Gates. One of the first things Senator-elect Humphrey did was call President Truman. Humphrey arranged for a White House meeting for his parents in which they could meet the president. President Truman graciously gave them a personal tour of the White House. On January 3, 1949, Humphrey was sworn into the Senate. His father remarked, "The White House might be in your future." Hubert Humphrey Sr. also told his son that his health was failing.¹²⁸ Despite the personal accomplishments and issues Humphrey was the only new Senator not given a temporary office while Congress was in a special session. Likely Humphrey was treated this way because of his speech over civil rights that put immense tension of the Democratic Party. Fortunately, he did

¹²⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 62.

¹²⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 86.

have an office thanks to Paul Porter, a Washington lawyer who supported the Democratic Party. However, Humphrey was slighted more than once during the beginning of his career in the Senate. The senior Senators introduced the new Senators for every state besides Minnesota. Republicans Edward Thye and Joseph Ball completely ignored the new young Senator. Many of the elder Senators believed Humphrey was too young, inexperienced, and he was not really liked for his stance on civil rights. Democratic Senator Lister Hill of Alabama noticed the slight and decided to introduce him to the Senate floor.¹²⁹ Humphrey never forgot such a kind gesture.

Despite some resistance from his peers a few fellow Senators did embrace Humphrey in Congress. Paul Douglas of Illinois, Estes Kefauver of Tennessee and James Murray of Montana all welcomed Humphrey to the Senate. Humphrey was crushed when he heard the remarks of the powerful Senator from Georgia Richard Russell remark that, "How could people from Minnesota send such a damn fool to Congress."¹³⁰ Humphrey became the first Senator to hire an African American senior aide, Cyril E. King. King was from the Virgin Islands, where he later became a politician. One evening for a dinner party Humphrey invited Cyril to the event where he was told segregation is the rule of the land and Humphrey remarked, "I don't give a damn" and told the waiter that any who dined at my home is welcome here.¹³¹

Humphrey self-inflicted a lot of wounds during his early career in the Senate. Before he even got into the Senate he made a statement saying there was enough votes in the Senate to pass a civil rights bill if everyone was honest and sincere.¹³² Humphrey was also his own worst critic. On *Meet the Press*, Humphrey admitted that he and his ADA affiliated comrades were wrong for

¹²⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 87.

¹³⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 87.

¹³¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 52.

¹³² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 55.

trying to ditch Truman during the 1948 election.¹³³ Humphrey's main issue in the Senate did not just come from being a newcomer, but from the era's growing conservatism.¹³⁴ President Truman's State of the Union address called for a "Fair Deal". His goal for the Fair Deal consisted of expanding Social Security, national health insurance, provide federal aid to public schools and so on. But little was actually accomplished during this era. In 1946, the Republican Party won fifty-six seats in the House and thirteen in the Senate. Republicans controlled the House and there was a dissatisfaction with Truman and the Democratic Party due to their long reign of power. The issue of civil rights bitterly divided the Democratic Party revealing the true power of conservatives and the Dixiecrats.

When Humphrey first got to the Senate he put civil rights front and center. During his first two months he made a speech at the all black Howard University. This angered many conservatives within his party. He encouraged many of the black students to use their education to liberalize the South when they went back home.¹³⁵ Humphrey was a staunch believer in the fact that every human being regardless of skin color, should receive the same civil liberties as white males.¹³⁶ However, a much larger issue loomed in the shadows. The Democrats knew that they could not successfully push civil rights legislation without the Dixiecrats filibustering. The Democratic Party tried to pass civil rights legislation six times between the 1930s and early 1949, but did not have any success. The last attempt came in 1949 when Vice President Barkley tried to alter Senate Standing Rule XXII,I which required two-thirds of the senators present and voting to invoke cloture, or end debate.¹³⁷ Cloture requires a supermajority of the Congress to

¹³³ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 55.

¹³⁴ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 61.

¹³⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 63.

¹³⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 114.

¹³⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 62.

end debate. Cloture requires two thirds of all present and voting Senators approval to end a filibuster. In February, Richard Russell began to filibuster this issue which angered Humphrey. Humphrey proposed an around the clock Senate session to dramatize the session. But the idea was immediately shot down as there was a fear that elder senators might have their health come into jeopardy and spending too much time on one issue might cause the Senate to postpone more important topics.¹³⁸

Humphrey's idea did even more damage to his relationship with Southern politicians. Senator Willis Robertson of Virginia claimed that Humphrey and other senators who sought majority rule were trying to unconstitutionally force the issue of civil rights.¹³⁹ Months later Humphrey again pushed the issue of civil rights. He sought to have a federal Commission of Civil Rights to protect citizens from civil rights violations. The White House proposed to create a FEPC to protect and ensure civil rights for everyone through the Justice Department. But Humphrey and many of the young liberals did not have the support to challenge the South and Republicans against a Russell led filibuster. The failed attempts made Humphrey focus locally on Washington D.C.. He urged many local restaurants, hotels, and theatres to open up their buildings to African Americans, but had little success.

The Truman administration did have some success in their first year with the National Housing Act.¹⁴⁰ Humphrey was aware of the housing issue reflecting upon his time as mayor. The act created sixty one thousand homes before Truman left office and by 1964 nearly three hundred and fifty thousand.¹⁴¹ However, the act was not as successful as everyone had hoped

¹³⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 62.

¹³⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 63.

¹⁴⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 63.

¹⁴¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 63.

because the act did not compete with private real estate development which led to poorly built homes in usually crime ridden locations.¹⁴² In April 1949, Humphrey proposed a bill that called for equal matches between employers and employees towards health insurance. In February 1950, Humphrey claimed the Senator Harry Byrd was spending undocumented money for federal reports that were extremely costly and his committee needed to be abolished.¹⁴³ Humphrey was not met with an immediate response as he was not aware that Senator Byrd was away from the Senate.¹⁴⁴ Byrd was away from the Senate as he became seriously ill. This act by Humphrey was deemed more inappropriate than the acts of Senator Byrd since he broke a code in Congress “never attack a Senator when he is not there.”¹⁴⁵ After a six day hiatus Byrd was back and declared that Humphrey made nine mistakes in less than two thousand words.¹⁴⁶ Byrd and Humphrey’s relationship never truly recovered after Humphrey’s blunder, despite not knowing of Senator Byrd’s absence.

Within his first two years in the Senate Humphrey began to seem like a defeated man. This was evident to Ralph Naftalin when he joined Humphrey’s staff in the summer of 1951.¹⁴⁷ His agenda of civil rights, national health insurance, and labor relations had been rejected numerous times. By early 1952, Humphrey tried to raise his political standings by demonstrating his anticommunist views.¹⁴⁸ In April 1952, Humphrey was one of a handful of Democrats that

¹⁴² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 64.

¹⁴³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 91.

¹⁴⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 92.

¹⁴⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 92.

¹⁴⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 92.

¹⁴⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 117.

¹⁴⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 65.

supported President Truman's seizure of steel mills. Humphrey again supported Truman on liberalizing America's immigration policy.

In 1953, Humphrey's fortunes began to change in the Senate. Lyndon B. Johnson and Humphrey built a relationship rather quickly. Humphrey and Johnson were both teachers at one point, both Democrats were not in support of Truman in 1948, and they were both supporters of FDR's New Deal and foreign policy ideals. The two men had little contact until 1950 after the Senator Byrd incident. Eventually, the two began to have conversations in Johnson's office often involving heavy drinking. Senator Richard Russell often critiqued Johnson for his admiration of Humphrey. After Johnson became the minority leader he would invite Humphrey to his ranch for further conversations. Minnesota was promised a seat on the Agriculture Committee in 1954. Their relationship opened new doors for Humphrey in his political career. He was able to learn more about the points of view of the Southern Democrats and build a relationship with them. Despite their relationship Johnson rejected some of Humphrey's political ideas due to his belief in states' rights as he was a Southern Democrat.¹⁴⁹

In 1955, Humphrey expressed his true feelings of the Midwest. He believed that the federal government needed to aid farmers in a similar way that they did the railroads, steel plants, and various other sources within the American economy. He recognized the fact the number of American farmers had dropped nearly forty percent from 1900 until 1955.¹⁵⁰ He noticed that only more modern farms were finding success in the post war era and family farms were suffering the most. However, this is most likely due to technological advancements. He believed that America was becoming completely metropolitan. In 1956, Senator Humphrey

¹⁴⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 100.

¹⁵⁰ Haynes, John Earl. "Farm Coops and the Election of Hubert Humphrey to the Senate." 210.

proposed a “Farmers Bill of Rights.” His goal was to improve the standard way of living for farmers and preserving their family values.¹⁵¹ However, the Eisenhower administration proposed legislation to provide a sliding scale that would offset financial losses for farmers.

¹⁵¹ Haynes, John Earl. "Farm Coops and the Election of Hubert Humphrey to the Senate." 211.

CHAPTER 5

EYES ON THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

In 1956, Humphrey sought the Democratic nominee for Vice President despite his own belief that Dwight Eisenhower would win reelection.¹⁵² Humphrey did so in belief that his campaigning abilities would prove to his party that he would be a viable candidate in the 1960 Presidential Election.¹⁵³ Adlai Stevenson ran against President Eisenhower. But did not have much success. Humphrey sought to raise his own political stature as he was selected to provide the key note address at the Democratic convention. The early interest in Stevenson, spawned a lot of disagreements within the Democratic Party as many Senators supported Estes Kefauver of Tennessee for president.¹⁵⁴ Humphrey was left in a sticky situation as he had to decide between staying in Washington to get the agriculture bill passed or go to Minnesota and help Stevenson campaign for president. Kefauver had success when he tried to gain the Democratic nominee in 1956 by winning New Hampshire and Minnesota. Stevenson did have a lot of success in California for his stances on desegregation.¹⁵⁵ The loss in California caused Kefauver to suspend his own presidential campaign.

Humphrey in return failed to achieve his goal of delivering the keynote address for his party. This was mainly due to his speech at the DNC in 1948, which the Southern Democrats had not forgotten. One evening in July, Stevenson asked Humphrey and his legislative counsel to

¹⁵² Reichard, Gary W. "Divisions and Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy, 1952-1956." *Political Science Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (1978): 58-59. doi:10.2307/2149050.

¹⁵³ Reichard, "Divisions and Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy, 1952-1956", 58.

¹⁵⁴ Reichard, "Divisions and Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy, 1952-1956", 58.

¹⁵⁵ ALLEN, CRAIG. "MEDIA WHIPPING THE DEMOCRATS, 1955-1956." In *Eisenhower and the Mass Media: Peace, Prosperity, and Prime-time TV*, 98-99. University of North Carolina Press, 1993. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9780807860076_allen.10.

meet with him in his room at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington. Stevenson was looking for a list of potential candidates to be his Vice Presidential choice as he did not want Estes Kefauver.¹⁵⁶ Humphrey provided a list that included Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee, Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, and G. Mennen Williams of Michigan, but Stevenson wanted someone else.¹⁵⁷ Stevenson praised Humphrey for his qualifications as a Senator and as a viable option for Vice President, but Humphrey was unsure he could gain Southern support for the nomination. The only way Humphrey could actually receive the nomination in Stevenson's mind was if he gained Southern support. Stevenson shocked the entire Democratic Party by leaving the decision of choosing a running mate to the convention delegates. Stevenson's theory believed it should be up to the party to decide his running mate in case he was not able to fulfill his term. Without Southern support all fingers pointed towards Estes Kefauver as Stevenson's Vice Presidential partner. However, Kefauver surprised everyone with his decision to accept second place and become Stevenson's running mate. Kefauver had the ability to help win the South since he was from Tennessee and he had the most organized and committed support.¹⁵⁸

Humphrey was absolutely stunned by the announcement. He only learned about the decision by watching the convention on television. Humphrey had little to no support. In 1956, Humphrey just did not stand a chance. Humphrey was left hurt and angered because of the selection. Lyndon Johnson knew 1956, was not a good year for Humphrey and felt bad for him as he knew that he only did his best work under adversity.¹⁵⁹ Humphrey, lost out on an opportunity at the White House, and endured difficulties from Southern Democrats. Johnson

¹⁵⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 118.

¹⁵⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 118.

¹⁵⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 119.

¹⁵⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 116.

viewed Humphrey as a rising star in American politics.¹⁶⁰ Their established friendship aided Humphrey in gaining respect from some Southern Dixiecrats. At the time of their friendship Lyndon Johnson was Senate Majority leader, a position he held until becoming Vice President. The connection to Lyndon Johnson allowed him to attend Senate luncheons that allowed him to connect with the Southern Democrats. The new found relationship enabled Humphrey to build favorable relationships with Carl Hayden, Sam Rayburn, Alben Barkley Russel Long, and Richard Russell.¹⁶¹

In hope of reaching the White House in 1960, Humphrey felt it was his time to shine on the national stage. Humphrey was the spokesman of liberal domestic policies. However, he needed to establish himself on foreign policy issues. Two topics of interest were on the table for Humphrey. First, the Cold War and nuclear crisis. Second, he wished to establish peace in the Middle East.¹⁶² Early on in 1958, Humphrey tested the Eisenhower administration's handling of the nuclear arms issue. Humphrey felt that the Cold War needed to be the heart of United States foreign policy.¹⁶³ He felt that President Eisenhower was essentially sending the United States on a mutual pact to suicide.¹⁶⁴ Humphrey believed that the nation needed to put itself first. What he meant by this is not focusing on military aid, but by promoting agricultural reform, the rights of labor, and other domestic issues.¹⁶⁵ With the pleas of Humphrey and Lyndon Johnson the

¹⁶⁰ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 326.

¹⁶¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 115.

¹⁶² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 115.

¹⁶³ Reichard, "Divisions and Dissent: Democrats and Foreign Policy, 1952-1956." 59.

¹⁶⁴ Humphrey, "Government Organization for Arms Control," 967; statement of Jan. 4, 1958, ACR, Jan. 27, 1958, 655-56; "What Hope for Disarmament?" NYT Magazine, Jan 5, 1958, CHR, Jan, 1958, 139-141.

¹⁶⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 136.

Eisenhower administration announced on October 31, the indefinite halt in American nuclear testing.¹⁶⁶

By late 1959, Humphrey began developing a reputation to become a viable Democratic nominee for the 1960 Presidential election and he felt this was his year. Humphrey faced a tough decision about how he should campaign for the presidency. One of his close friends James Rowe suggested that dealing with the primaries was the only way you could gain enough support.¹⁶⁷ Rowe, also advised him to put his Senatorial duties on hold even when key votes were needed to campaign. Humphrey later remarked, “Rowe was right and I was wrong.”¹⁶⁸ The major candidates for the 1960 presidential election were John F. Kennedy, Pat Brown, Lyndon Johnson, and Hubert Humphrey. Kennedy, Humphrey’s main competitor decided to be a full time candidate and decided not to focus on the Senate. Kennedy was initially rejected as a possible candidate since he was considered to be too young, he was Catholic, and he did not have much political experience at that point.¹⁶⁹ Many critics of Kennedy believed that he should first run as Vice President instead of President since he was young and less experienced than other candidates.¹⁷⁰ He ran for Vice President in 1956, but did not have success. One of the main issues plaguing Kennedy was the fact that he was a Roman Catholic. Kennedy’s first major victory as a candidate was beating Senator Hubert Humphrey in the Wisconsin primary. Kennedy’s family campaigned vigorously for him and Humphrey did not have much money due to insufficient financial backing. The Kennedy family had to work hard for this primary since

¹⁶⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 138.

¹⁶⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 149.

¹⁶⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 149.

¹⁶⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 144.

¹⁷⁰ Editors, History.com/ “John F. Kennedy.” History.com. October 29, 2018. Accessed February 26, 2019. <https://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/john/f/kennedy>.

Wisconsin is essentially Humphrey's backyard. Humphrey believed that much of Kennedy's success came from the heavily Catholic regions of the state. In Milwaukee, Kennedy visited local barbershops, and walked the streets talking with everyone he could. Kennedy presented himself as calm and intelligent.¹⁷¹ The victory for Kennedy was a close contest. This idea gave Humphrey hope going into the West Virginia primary. Despite the loss in Wisconsin some of Humphrey's closest friends suggested that he should pursue the Vice Presidential nominee instead of continuing to put himself in financial debt by challenging the Kennedy machine.¹⁷²

The first televised debate of 1960 took place in West Virginia, showcasing Hubert Humphrey versus John F. Kennedy. Humphrey's major blunder was his insufficient ability to raise money. The Kennedy's by contrast were able to handout twenty dollar bills if people supported him. Humphrey had his closest friends Orville Freeman, Eugenie Anderson, Max Kapelman, and his eighteen year old son Skip doing most of his fundraising.¹⁷³ Kennedy, on the other hand had a superb campaign that was well-financed. During the primary, Humphrey tried to gain the support of West Virginians by saying that the days of anyone, but a millionaire running for office are over.¹⁷⁴ When it came to the issue of religion Humphrey sought advice from his former graduate school advisor Evron Kirkpatrick.¹⁷⁵ Kirkpatrick advised Humphrey to

¹⁷¹ Clauber, Bill. "Scenes from the 1960 Wisconsin Primary Chaotic, Poignant." Jstor.org. Accessed November 15, 2018. <http://archive.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/scenes-from-1960-wisconsin-primary-chaotic-poignant-b99148293z1-232954951.html/>.

¹⁷² Marr, Andrew. "President John F. Kennedy and the Art of Dirty Politics." BBC News. November 19, 2010. Accessed February 26, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-11718369>.

¹⁷³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 191.

¹⁷⁴ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 148.

¹⁷⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 148.

make a national statement regarding his stance on equality since he spent much of his career fighting for religious and racial equality.

However, Humphrey took a different note. Humphrey called out the nation over the issue of religion. Kennedy made a major speech to the American Society of Newspapers Editors in Washington D.C. Kennedy declared that the nation was making too much of a deal about the religious issue instead of the issues that really mattered such as taxes, inflation, and disarmament.¹⁷⁶ Humphrey felt that a Catholic being in office would only tear the party apart.¹⁷⁷ A victory in West Virginia for Kennedy meant that the issue of his Catholicism, would not prove fatal to the party in Protestant states.¹⁷⁸ Kennedy had the ability to connect to the people of West Virginia. He did so by discussing his time serving in World War II as a naval officer and talked about his brother's death when he flew out for his last bombing mission and stated that "no one ever asked us about our religion."¹⁷⁹ Humphrey immediately realized his father was right, the lack of military service only hindered his political career. Furthermore, Humphrey was picked apart by Kennedy and his aides since he could not win a primary in a state that was right next to his own home state and he could not be a viable candidate since he could not do so.¹⁸⁰ With Kennedy's superb campaign Humphrey felt like the odd man out of his own presidential dreams. Humphrey compared this experience to an independent business running against a large chain store. However, the two did find common ground as Humphrey decided to drop out of the race. They both were aware of the long declining economic state of West Virginia. In a sense the Kennedy fortune bought JFK the election since he was able to dominate the radio, newspapers,

¹⁷⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 148.

¹⁷⁷ Karol, David. *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3 (2004): 565-66. doi:10.2307/20202424.

¹⁷⁸ Karol, *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 3. 565.

¹⁷⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 148.

¹⁸⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 148.

and television.¹⁸¹ Humphrey's campaign only had the ability to spend twenty five thousand dollars compared to Kennedy's reported total of ninety two thousand dollars.¹⁸² However, Kennedy did out work Humphrey and used West Virginia's political culture against Humphrey. JFK won the Democratic nomination because the Democratic Party needed a fresh face. Kennedy picked one of Humphrey's closest friends as his running mate in 1960 Lyndon B. Johnson in hopes of gaining support from the South.

In 1961, Humphrey became the Senate Majority Whip and his goal became to define his parties direction. Humphrey was no longer the new kid on the block as he now had connections to throughout the Senate and possessed a leadership position. During this time he served on a variety of committees including Foreign relations, agriculture, and Appropriations. Appropriations held a high standard as it determined where and how much money was spent. Humphrey declared that ,”he loved being Majority Whip since it did not matter if everyone liked you or not, but they all had to deal with me.”¹⁸³ During his time as Majority whip he introduced legislation related to poverty in Appalachia, the war on poverty as a nation, civil rights, Job Corps, and the peace corps. Also, during the height of the Cold War, Humphrey helped create the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.¹⁸⁴

For much of 1962, Humphrey had to fight with an alliance of Republicans and Dixiecrats that kept rejecting key bills. Humphrey and Vice President Johnson believed that to solve this Kennedy needed to have a stronger presence on Capitol Hill. Kennedy was on the campaign trail

¹⁸¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 170.

¹⁸² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 152.

¹⁸³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 181.

¹⁸⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 186.

when news broke that the CIA noticed Soviet ships with cargo heading to Cuba.¹⁸⁵ Humphrey supported the idea of possible war if it had to be done. Humphrey believed the Monroe Doctrine still enabled the United States to get involved with any European nation trying to get involved with Latin America.¹⁸⁶ He believed that a lack of action might hurt the Democrats in the ensuing election. Humphrey soon began to believe that Kennedy was not strong enough as president to act upon the possibility of a Cuban threat.¹⁸⁷ However, to the luck of the Democratic Party, the missile incident did not harm them on election day. The missile crisis also brought about talk of disarmament, which Humphrey had been the main spokesperson.

Nothing else in Humphrey's political career emphasized his commitment to liberalism as much as his commitment to the issue of civil rights and the passage of the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964. The passage of this bill was a defining moment that made Humphrey a Vice Presidential candidate before the election. The passage of this bill signified the completion of the revolution he started after his speech in Philadelphia during 1948 Democratic National Convention.¹⁸⁸ President Lyndon Johnson was essentially a bystander for civil rights, but he understood the issue and the need nationwide. Johnson, also felt it was essential to get the civil rights bill passed to honor John F. Kennedy and gain votes from African Americans leading into an election year.¹⁸⁹ Humphrey was the political master mind behind the challenging the issue. Johnson was more worried about foreign policy and possible tax cuts than civil rights. Johnson

¹⁸⁵ Maddock, Shane J. "Kennedy, Castro, and Capos." *Reviews in American History* 37, no. 2 (2009): 280.. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40211016>.

¹⁸⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 213.

¹⁸⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 172.

¹⁸⁸ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 176.

¹⁸⁹ Serwer, Adam. "Lyndon Johnson Was a Civil Rights Hero. But Also a Racist." MSNBC. April 12, 2014. Accessed March 13, 2018. <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/lyndon-johnson-civil-rights-racism>.

also seemed hesitant to challenge his old Dixiecrat counterparts in the Senate. Johnson rose to power in part because of his connections within the Dixiecrat Party, but used his power to overcome their power structure. By passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Johnson cemented his legacy as a liberal.¹⁹⁰ Humphrey was a supporter of the Kennedy administration since they did try to help the Freedom Riders in 1961.¹⁹¹ After city officials in Albany, Georgia, arrested thousands of people protesting segregation in 1962, Humphrey and nine other senators pleaded with Attorney General Bobby Kennedy. Kennedy insisted it was up to the local officials to release them. Also, in 1962, Humphrey and five other senators pressured Kennedy to pass a civil rights law, but were rejected immediately.¹⁹²

In 1963, Kennedy knew that Nelson Rockefeller, the governor of New York might be his next opponent for reelection. On June 11, 1963, Kennedy in response delivered a speech “Report to the American People on Civil Rights” that proclaimed civil rights as a morale issue and laid the foundation for the ensuing Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹⁹³ Humphrey was excited about the new commitment to civil rights as were many in the movement. Humphrey’s next issue was to make sure the next civil rights bill expanded beyond just racial discrimination that the FEPC has handled.¹⁹⁴ Humphrey began calling for an Equal Employment Opportunity Act, which went beyond anything else currently on the table.¹⁹⁵ In 1957, Humphrey like many Democrats was

¹⁹⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 213.

¹⁹¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 176.

¹⁹² "JFK and Civil Rights." PBS. Accessed January 13, 2019.

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/jfk-domestic-politics/>.

¹⁹³ Kennedy, “President Kennedy’s Radio-TV Address on Civil Rights,” *Congressional Quarterly* (14 June 1963): 970–971.

¹⁹⁴ "'Into the Bright Sunshine' - Hubert Humphrey's Civil-rights Agenda." Minnesota Post. February 02, 2012. Accessed January 7, 2019. <https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2011/05/bright-sunshine-hubert-humphreys-civil-rights-agenda/>.

¹⁹⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 179.

against the proposed civil rights bill. The Democratic Party viewed it as a tool for the Republican Party since they had not focused on civil rights in nearly a century. Senate Majority Leader Johnson believed the bill was a watered down attempt by the Republican Party to gain African American support.¹⁹⁶ Humphrey called for equal opportunity based off of educational attainment, job opportunities, and a development of a way to enforce nondiscrimination. Black unemployment was nearly double compared to whites and Humphrey wanted that to change.¹⁹⁷ However, Kennedy was not able to get the bill passed before his assassination on November 22, 1963. The death of Kennedy not only stunned the nation, but left the issue of civil rights in limbo as a former Dixiecrat came to power.

Johnson during his inaugural address introduced his plans for the United States. Johnson knew that he needed to pass a civil rights bill to not only cement the legacy of President Kennedy, but also his own.¹⁹⁸ Ohio Republicans William McCulloch and Clarence Brown sought to put an end to the bill by adding the issue of sex.¹⁹⁹ However, the house elected to pass the bill on February 10 by a vote of 290-132 with 138 Republicans in favor.²⁰⁰ There was still some retaliation within the Senate about the new civil rights bill. Southerners began to try and filibuster the bill, but for the first time Humphrey and other Senators challenged their statements.²⁰¹ When met with retaliation Humphrey said that civil rights was a moral issue and

¹⁹⁶ Serwer, Adam. "Lyndon Johnson Was a Civil Rights Hero. But Also a Racist." MSNBC. April 12, 2014. Accessed March 13, 2018. <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/lyndon-johnson-civil-rights-racism>.

¹⁹⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 217.

¹⁹⁸ Serwer, Lyndon Johnson Was a Civil Rights Hero. But Also a Racist."

¹⁹⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 183.

²⁰⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 208.

²⁰¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 185.

not a national issue and the bill is about creating better educational and economic opportunities for minorities.²⁰²

Humphrey opened the formal debate for March 30, and the Southerners were absent. Humphrey explained what every title of every section meant and the reason for such section. Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina said that the 14th Amendment did not matter since it was passed during Reconstruction.²⁰³ Humphrey had support nationwide especially in the North as nearly seventy percent of Northerners supported the bill.²⁰⁴ Humphrey was met with retaliation from Senator Everett Dirksen who claimed that public desegregation should be virtually voluntary. The filibuster was beginning to tire Humphrey and his support. However, Dirksen and other Republicans were willing to pass a modified version of the bill.²⁰⁵ The thought was that a passage of a modified bill would appeal to their parties voters in November. The opposing forces met on May 13, and the bill was called a clean bill that included the Mansfield-Dirksen jury trial amendment. Humphrey contacted Johnson to let him know that they had an even better bill than they did before and he thinks it will pass.²⁰⁶

Johnson was skeptical of an actual passage of the bill, but Humphrey reassured him that two or three senators would vote for the bill if needed. On his way to the senate floor Humphrey slipped Senator Philip Hart of Michigan a piece of paper that had the number sixty nine written on it. Senator Richard Russell argued that the bill infringed on the constitutional and property rights. The voting for the bill took only about ten minutes. Senator Mike Mansfield declared that

²⁰² Wilson, Paula. *The Civil Rights Rhetoric of Hubert Humphrey 1948-1964* (Lanham: University Press of America 1996), 68.

²⁰³ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 186.

²⁰⁴ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 184.

²⁰⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 211.

²⁰⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 213.

he had never seen the chamber so quiet before in his time as a senator. The final tally for cloture was 71-29 four more votes than necessary. This not only marked the first time that cloture occurred on a civil rights bill, but also ended the longest filibuster in American history. The night of the vote two southern Democrats reached out to Humphrey and told him they were giving up. The final vote for the bill was on June 19, with a tally of 73-27.²⁰⁷ The House Judiciary Committee accepted the Senate civil rights bill in place of the previous one. Chairman Smith delayed action on the bill until committee members took control on June 30th when the bill was voted on again and passed by vote of 289-126.²⁰⁸ That evening Johnson signed the bill into law. Hubert Humphrey and Lyndon Johnson did everything they could to get Kennedy's civil rights law into effect. Humphrey finally got his wish nearly sixteen years after his first national plea for civil rights and his work for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, allowed him to set his eyes on the White House.

²⁰⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 191.

²⁰⁸ Erica Frankenberg, and Kendra Taylor. "ESEA and the Civil Rights Act: An Interbranch Approach to Furthering Desegregation." *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences* 1, no. 3 (2015): 41.. doi:10.7758/rsf.2015.1.3.02.

CHAPTER 6

HUMPHREY VERSUS JOHNSON

Humphrey dreamt that one day he might become President of the United States. However, he always knew that he had a variety of hurdles to overcome, if he wanted his dream to become a reality. He was a poor man and from a relatively small state, and did not have rich friends. Humphrey became aware that his mostly likely path to the White House involved first being Vice President.

After the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Humphrey's name was ushered into the forefront of possible running mates for Johnson. In the Spring of 1964, Jim Rowe, Humphrey's primary campaign organizer informed him that "all things being equal the appointment is yours."²⁰⁹ Humphrey was not really sure if the Vice Presidency was his to lose.²¹⁰ He was still stunned by Adlai Stevenson's decision in 1956 to select Estes Kefauver as his running mate. Then to add insult to injury Johnson spoke highly of other Vice Presidential candidates such as Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and during a rally in Minnesota where Johnson praised Humphrey for his work on the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but also praised fellow Minnesotans Orville Freeman and Eugene McCarthy.²¹¹ Freeman and McCarthy also had hopes of being Vice President.

Many of Johnson's associates from Texas believed he should select McCarthy as a running mate. McCarthy was a member of Harry Byrd's Financial Committee which gained him

²⁰⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 194.

²¹⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 249.

²¹¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 251.

some trust from the South, despite his support for civil rights.²¹² Johnson believed that since McCarthy was a Catholic it would help him gain some support from the Kennedy supporters. However another Catholic also sought the vacant Vice Presidential position. Robert Kennedy the brother of the late John Fitzgerald Kennedy believed Johnson needed him politically and felt destined to continue his late brother's agenda. Kennedy and Johnson did not have the best relationship. Dating back nearly a decade Kennedy worked on Joseph McCarthy's witch hunting committee and after the assassination of his brother he tried to block Johnson's ascendance to the Presidency.²¹³ Kennedy believed Johnson was sworn into office too fast when his brother was shot in Dallas. Even more so Kennedy was upset that Johnson began working in the Oval Office before his brother's belongs were removed.²¹⁴ At times Johnson felt isolated while he was Vice President and was not favorable of Bobby Kennedy when he showed up late to Johnson's first cabinet meeting. Johnson told White House aide Kenneth O'Donnell that he was not going to choose Kennedy as his running mate unless reelection was certain.²¹⁵

Johnson felt he might have to select someone he could possibly beat in the next election as his running mate. Several liberal governors supported Humphrey as Vice President including Governor Pat Brown Democrat of California. However, Humphrey's home state of Minnesota supported Kennedy for the vacancy. In 1964, the Republican Party nominated Barry Goldwater as their candidate. Goldwater made a poor choice for his running mate in William E. Miller. The selection of William Miller made it clear that President Johnson knew he did not need the

²¹² Lerner, Mitchell. "Vietnam and the 1964 Election: A Defense of Lyndon Johnson." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (1995): 756. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27551510>.

²¹³ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. March 30, 1970. 15. Robert F. Kennedy Oral History Program of the John F. Kennedy Library.

²¹⁴ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. 17.

²¹⁵ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. 19.

Kennedy name on the ticket.²¹⁶ Johnson called Kennedy to the Oval Office and told him that he needed a running mate that can help him win the South, the border states and the Midwest.²¹⁷ President Johnson wanted to win in 1964 and again in 1968, and he feared that anyone with Humphrey's success might try to challenge him.²¹⁸ In late July, Johnson called Humphrey and told him that he wanted Humphrey to remain loyal to him much like he was to President Kennedy. In early August Humphrey traveled to Chicago, New York, and Detroit to win the support of major bankers and businessmen.²¹⁹ He wanted to establish himself as a moderate to Henry Ford II, Roger Blough, and Keith Funston. Humphrey proposed the idea of a business government partnership much like during the World War II era. Humphrey wanted the government to set "actual goals" instead of impossible ones. All three businessmen viewed Humphrey as a moderate who could get things done, and feared the radicalism of Goldwater.²²⁰

The state of Mississippi was in complete chaos after three civil rights workers went missing during "Freedom Summer." Fannie Lou Hamer and other activists created the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), and caused tension within the White House. They wanted their delegation represented at the Democratic convention and not the usual segregationist Democrats, Paul Johnson, in Mississippi. Hamer's dramatic story in Atlantic City put pressure on the Democratic Party. Johnson called a press conference in the middle of her speech and told Humphrey that he was doing a lousy job finding a solution.²²¹ Humphrey began to second guess in perusal of civil rights since he felt that enough was done in such a short about

²¹⁶ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. 20.

²¹⁷ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. 20.

²¹⁸ Hubert H. Humphrey. Recorded interview by Larry J. Hackman. 20.

²¹⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 291.

²²⁰ Eisele, *Almost to Presidency, 197*; NYT, Aug. 4, 7, 1964.

²²¹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 214.

of time and the United States needed time to digest the changes.²²² Humphrey proposed to Martin Luther King and Fannie Lou Hamer to not seek the two seats, and rather give in so he can become Vice President and try to advance the issue of civil rights.²²³

Humphrey did pull off a masterpiece when he did get the MFDP two seats and the convention. He suggested excluding Fannie Lou Hamer as a delegate, and choosing Edward King, a white clergymen, and Aaron Henry. Humphrey also suggested that the regular Democrats could only take a seat if they took a loyalty oath. Humphrey got Walter Mondale to get the committee together and sign off on the agreement.²²⁴ Despite the success of Humphrey's efforts the MFDP and the Democratic Party made a simple mistake. In an interview between Morgan Ginther and Walter Mondale, Mondale claims, "That the MFDP did not understand the complexity of the work that required a successful movement at the convention. The Democratic Party was not aware of the energy and depth of the spirit behind the movement."²²⁵ To accomplish the integration of the Mississippi Party and the support for Johnson compromise was the only way to satisfy both sides. Humphrey's work at the Democratic National Convention gained him enough trust with Johnson. In August, Johnson told Humphrey that he was indeed his running mate and said "if he didn't realize it a month earlier he was a damn fool."²²⁶

The Democrats won the 1964 Presidential election by a landslide of 486 to 52. On January 20, 1965 Humphrey with his longtime friend Fred Gates by his side took the oath as the

²²² Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 200.

²²³ Mondale, Walter. *The Good Fight: A Life in Liberal Politics* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN), 78.

²²⁴ Mondale, *The Good Fight: A Life in Liberal Politics*. 84.

²²⁵ Morgan Ginther. "The Mississippi Delegation Debate at the 1964 Democratic National Convention: An interview with Former Vice President Walter Mondale. *Southern Cultures* 20, no 4 (2014): 106-115. <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed February 15, 2019).

²²⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 251.

thirty eighth Vice President ending a thirteen month vacancy. The Vice Presidency was not always a glamorous job, but after the death of Franklin Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy the position began to gain merit especially in 1965 as the death of Kennedy was still on the nations conscience. President Johnson and Vice President Hubert Humphrey gradually became opponents during their time in the Oval Office. Johnson was abnormally self-centered, highly abusive of people, and paranoid.²²⁷ Johnson made Humphrey dress up as a cowboy in front of reporters and cameramen as he escort Johnson around his ranch in Texas.²²⁸ Johnson did so to make Hubert realize how dependent he was on the president and to let him know he is inferior. Johnson once again chastised Humphrey after the death of Winston Churchill. Churchill had an impact on the lives of a generation of Americans and held Humphrey from attending his funeral. Instead Johnson sent Chief Justice Earl Warren. Humphrey knew of this since he was close to Johnson in the Senate when he was majority leader and Johnson used to bully, punish, and reward Senators for their decisions. Humphrey knew the best way to stay on good terms was to always give Johnson credit for ideas.²²⁹ Humphrey realized from this point on there were no more Humphrey ideas, Humphrey rooms, or really anything related to him all credit goes to President Johnson.²³⁰ In December 1964, Humphrey and Orville Freeman again witnessed how crazy President Johnson was as he called them into his office with a fake report saying he had a liver disease and only had six months to live. After showing the report to Humphrey and Freeman he asked Humphrey, what if it happened Inauguration Day? Would that make you happy?''²³¹

²²⁷ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 215.

²²⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 265.

²²⁹ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 216.

²³⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 219.

²³¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 261.

Humphrey's job as Vice President consisted of being the spokesman for the Great Society. Johnson wanted him to oversee poverty, educational, employment programs and oversee the administrations civil rights efforts. Humphrey fell victim to the hot and cold nature of President Johnson when some days it seemed he could do no wrong, but others he could not do anything right.²³² One instance was while Humphrey spoke in New York at an American Jewish Committee. During his speech Humphrey called for education to an end to bigotry and racism in the United States.²³³ Johnson often got upset if Humphrey received too much attention from the media which resulted in him having to decline interviews. Johnson told Adali Stevenson that he was going to pile work on Hubert Humphrey so he would not leak information to the nation.²³⁴ Humphrey often fell victim to Johnson for leaking information such as when he was addressing labor leaders and discussing a national minimum wage increase. Before the two were formally inaugurate Johnson told him that he was making Humphrey work on a committee to ensure the government's enforcement of civil rights.

The Johnson and Humphrey administration struggled greatly with the issue of Vietnam. On February 10, 1965 Humphrey attended the National Security Council meeting and got himself in serious trouble with the President. During this time Humphrey questioned why the United States was bombing North Vietnam. Humphrey declared that the Hanoi was not a very big city and did not have many resources within and he felt the bombings were pointless.²³⁵ Humphrey thought he would get yelled at by President Johnson and handle his verbal attacks, but

²³² Natoli, Marie D. "The Humphrey Vice Presidency in Retrospect." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (1982): 604. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27547873>.

²³³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 267.

²³⁴ Mondale, Walter. *The Good Fight: A Life in Liberal Politics*, 115.

²³⁵ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 268.

Humphrey was wrong.²³⁶ Humphrey's points from his speech included: Johnson moving into Barry Goldwater's stance on Vietnam by continually bombing and landing troops in Southeast Asia, questioned whether Johnson's proposed course of action was understandable to the American public instead of a vague national interest, and Humphrey declared the Democratic Party's goal was to prevent a World War III not instigate it.²³⁷ Humphrey was reprimanded by President Johnson for breaking his loyalty to him and excluded from various events within the White House such as Tuesday Luncheons and other foreign policy discussions. The isolation was not completely new to Humphrey as he suffered similar repercussions after his 1948 DNC speech when he was first elected to the Senate. The first time it was instigated by Harry Byrd and he was able to build friends to gain acceptance from the South. But this time it was from President Johnson. President Johnson did not trust Humphrey anymore and anytime Humphrey wanted to use his Vice Presidential privileges he needed the approval of President Johnson.²³⁸

Humphrey was placed into the presidential doghouse for almost a year. Humphrey knew that he broke his oath to the President by challenging his ideas. The isolation made Humphrey consider resigning from the Vice Presidency, but he knew he could not do it since only one person, John C. Calhoun, had done so, and the dependency on the Vice President in case of a catastrophe was imminent.²³⁹ Humphrey knew the only way to gain Johnson's trust again was to support him on all issues first beginning with Vietnam. Johnson continued to exclude him from

²³⁶ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 237.

²³⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 240.

²³⁸ Van Den Berg, Erik. "Supersalesman for the Great Society: Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, 1965-1969." *American Studies International* 36, no. 3 (1998): 59-72. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41279615>.

²³⁹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 8. Folder 4. Page 32.

all White House activities, but one he could not by law. However, Johnson found a loophole by making National Security Council meetings infrequent and short.

Johnson told Humphrey of the next phase to the Vietnam plan at a dinner in the White House in December 1965. Humphrey realized that Johnson's reputation within the liberal community was damaged greatly due to Vietnam. In February 1966, Humphrey went to nine Asian nations as the administration's spokesman. Johnson did not find these meetings important to him so he sent Humphrey in his place. Johnson explained to Humphrey his goal was to encourage reform in Saigon and encourage economic and social cooperation within the Asian nations. When Humphrey returned to the United States, Johnson put Humphrey on another task. Johnson wanted Humphrey to become the spokesman of the Great Society. The Vietnam war became unpopular domestically as television cameras began working their way into homes. The Vietnam war was the first war to appear on mass national television and the blood and horrors of war became personable. Humphrey tried to take the domestic national attention off of Vietnam by flying around the country promoting various programs from the Great Society such as civil rights, the Peace Corps, and addressing issues such as farming problems, and labor issues.

In November 1967, Humphrey made comment about the current state of the Vietnam war and the risks of withdrawal might outweigh the risks of perseverance.²⁴⁰ Shortly, after Humphrey's declaration he encouraged President Johnson to yet again quit the bombings and placing an economic influence on the Vietnam war as bombing country sides where innocent people lived seemed pointless.²⁴¹ However at this time it seemed that the people of the United

²⁴⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 261.

²⁴¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 262.

States began to express interest in the Vietnam conflict despite the unlikelihood of a United States victory.²⁴²

²⁴² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 261.

CHAPTER 7

1968 AND THE AFTERMATH

President Lyndon B. Johnson accomplished a lot during his “Great Society” from the war on poverty, to the passage of essential civil rights legislation, and the expansion of space exploration. However, the Vietnam War, commonly called Johnson’s war, happened to be his Achilles heel. The year 1968, can be viewed as a decade within itself. The image of President Johnson changed drastically once the news media began to show the horrific scenes stemming from the already unpopular war. Despite the gruesome numbers and the medias portrayal of the war Johnson continued to declare the war was not as bad as it was portrayed.

Heading into 1968, Johnson and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara believed a rapid end to the war was very likely as the North Vietnamese were losing their desire to fight.²⁴³ Unexpectedly, a few days later the North Vietnamese launched the Tet Offensive. The aftermath of the Tet Offensive made President Johnson even more unpopular in the United States. Tet held a personal toll on President Johnson. On March 31, 1968, Johnson scheduled a televised address declaring that he planned to drastically reduce the bombing of North Vietnam, this decision appealed to the Hanoi government, but most importantly he declared he would not seek, and would not accept the nomination for his party in the fall election.²⁴⁴ Often President Johnson declared that he did not believe his health was good enough for four more years of the presidency, but most likely he was worried about the divisions within the nation and the party

²⁴³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 264.

²⁴⁴ Elving, Ron. "Remembering 1968: LBJ Surprises Nation With Announcement He Won't Seek Re-Election." NPR. March 25, 2018. Accessed February 13, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/2018/03/25/596805375/president-johnson-made-a-bombshell-announcement-50-years-ago>.

over the Vietnam issue.²⁴⁵ With the presumed Democratic nominee out of the race, a potential presidency marred by turmoil became vacant.

Fifteen days before Johnson announced his desire to no longer pursue the Democratic nominee, John F. Kennedy's brother Robert Kennedy announced in the Senate Caucus Room stating that the United States ought to "stand for hope instead of despair."²⁴⁶ Senator Kennedy was referring to the ongoing war in Vietnam and the modern state of the civil rights movement. Kennedy made a name for himself nearly immediately after entering the presidential race. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968. Only Bobby could relate to the African American community as almost five years prior his brother was assassinated. After a campaign stop in Indiana, Bobby announced the news to a crowd in the inner city of Indianapolis. The presidential candidate pleaded with the crowd to stay calm and understanding during such a grim time. Between all of the major cities that relied on violence to show their anger and sadness, Indianapolis listened to Bobby's plea.²⁴⁷ On June 4th, after winning the California primary Bobby Kennedy was shot by Sirhan Sirhan and died in the early hours of the next morning. After the death of Bobby Kennedy, Muriel Humphrey declared, The bullet that killed Bobby, also wounded Humphrey in more ways than one."²⁴⁸ The two were friends for nearly two decades as Humphrey and Kennedy talked frequently.

²⁴⁵ Elving, Ron. "Remembering 1968: LBJ Surprises Nation With Announcement He Won't Seek Re-Election." NPR. March 25, 2018. Accessed February 13, 2019.

²⁴⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 336.

²⁴⁷ "Robert F. Kennedy's Speech on the Assassination of MLK: 'Pain Which Cannot Forget'." Newsobserver. April 06, 2018. Accessed February 11, 2019. <https://www.newsobserver.com/opinion/op-ed/article207780409.html>.

²⁴⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 339.

Following Johnson's decision to no longer seek reelection in for the Democratic nomination his Vice President Hubert Humphrey declared that he planned to run in the fall election. On April 27, Humphrey declared that he planned to run for the Democratic nominee and he will do it as his own man.²⁴⁹ Many people within Humphrey's inner circle believed that since Kennedy died his nomination for the presidency might be diminished since many people believed the Presidency was Kennedy's since the day he announced his candidacy.²⁵⁰ Humphrey feared if Johnson changed the direction of the Vietnam War leading into the election his hopes of reaching the White House might diminish.²⁵¹ Humphrey believed since Bobby Kennedy died President Johnson would not have a reason to fix the fissures within the Democratic Party.²⁵² Most importantly Humphrey felt that his time as Vice President hurt his chances the most. As Vice President, Humphrey had to stay quiet and rarely made television appearances, the way President Johnson treated Humphrey, and lastly his dependency was on the president were issues that came public knowledge.²⁵³

Humphrey knew that the Democratic nomination was his to lose. He knew he could beat out Eugene McCarthy, but he was not sure how he should pursue a running mate. After the death of Bobby Kennedy, Hubert and Johnson talked for three hours in the White House. Johnson encouraged him to stay quiet about his decision and to remember how Johnson picked him.²⁵⁴ Humphrey proposed moving the Democratic National Convention from Chicago to Miami to

²⁴⁹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 347.

²⁵⁰ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 8. Folder 4. Page 19.

²⁵¹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 9. Folder 2. Page 43.

²⁵² Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 9. Folder 4. Page 42.

²⁵³ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 9. Folder 4. Page 57.

²⁵⁴ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 6. Folder 4. Page 17.

keep things quiet after the death of Bobby Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., but Johnson ignored such a proposal.²⁵⁵

Even before the death of Bobby Kennedy, George Wallace of Alabama announced his intention to run for the White House. In 1964, Wallace invaded the North by finding disaffected workers hesitantly willing to support him.²⁵⁶ In many Wallace much support in New England where Unions supported Wallace. Labor unions, were the backbone of Humphrey's political career dating to his time as mayor in Minneapolis. Humphrey knew if labor was against him the Democrats may not win reelection.²⁵⁷ President Johnson, however, did not do much to help Humphrey. Humphrey believed Johnson did not run again because he knew he could not win and Humphrey had suffered enough humiliation from Johnson. When the humiliation became public knowledge he was spit on, had trash thrown at him, and filth thrown at him while speaking at college campuses.

Minnesota's protégé Eugene McCarthy and his McCarthyites delivered two devastating blows to the Humphrey campaign. McCarthy portrayed Humphrey as the candidate of the bosses, not the people, and Humphrey's Vietnam strategy was the same rhetoric as President Johnson. McCarthyites screamed that democracy will be lost in a "bossed convention" and must appeal to all people regardless of race or sex and ending the Vietnam War.²⁵⁸

While campaigning Humphrey ran into issues in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Los Angeles. He was met by the jeers of nearly every social group holding signs saying "Dump the

²⁵⁵ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 384.

²⁵⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 342.

²⁵⁷ Hubert Humphrey Papers. Vice Presidency. Box 6. Folder 4. Page 30.

²⁵⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 343.

Hump” and being told “Honky go home”.²⁵⁹ His worst encounter at a personal level happened while he was in Detroit, Michigan. Humphrey met with a group of black leaders and was told the city was now roughly forty five percent black, they laughed at the idea of the Office of Economic Opportunity, and they demanded an open labor bill similar to the open housing act. Humphrey felt his work on civil rights was enough for the present and feared making much more progress too quickly.²⁶⁰ For Humphrey to survive he needed significant votes from African Americans and labor unions. At first Humphrey’s campaign was discouraging, had little hope, and resembled a circus act. Johnson’s intended campaign manager, Governor Terry Sanford, gave Humphrey some useful advice that hurt some of his friendships. Sanford suggested that he needed to find someone with experience to run his campaign and suggested Larry O’Brien who was running Bobby Kennedy’s campaign.²⁶¹ The news of Humphrey replacing his close friend Walter Mondale as campaign manager with O’Brien strained their relationship temporarily.²⁶²

Despite the shift in the Humphrey campaign staff one many did not know if Humphrey was pursuing the presidency for himself or if he was falling into another ploy of President Johnson. The Humphrey staff was split right down the middle as some considered the current direction detrimental to the nation and others felt they had to remain loyal to President Johnson.²⁶³ A press release in July 1968 declared that there would be a Johnson-Humphrey split which broke Humphrey emotionally as he did not want to portray himself as double crossing President Johnson and again breaking his oath of loyalty.²⁶⁴ Humphrey was stuck in a tough

²⁵⁹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Campaign. Box 7. Folder 8. Page 82.

²⁶⁰ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Campaign. Box 7. Folder 8. Page 85.

²⁶¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 344.

²⁶² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 344.

²⁶³ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Campaign. Box 4. Folder 1. Page 84.

²⁶⁴ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 344.

situation as he knew that he could not break his trust with Johnson, but knew if he wanted to win the election he needed to change course on the Vietnam War. During the Summer of 1968, Humphrey declared Johnson as a lame duck president and since he was trying to succeed him as president he should not support his discredited policies.²⁶⁵ He knew that Johnson was still president and still possessed enough power to either help or hurt his campaign and gain support of some southerners and Northerners such as Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley. Humphrey felt trapped by President Johnson, but his friend Walter Mondale claimed "Humphrey often complained about feeling trapped, but that is just his own nature."²⁶⁶ Humphrey never liked letting people down. Two examples prime examples are President Lyndon Johnson and his father. When he decided to return to the University of Minnesota in 1937, and left his father and the drugstore behind he felt like he let him down. However, Humphrey always admired his father and quoted him frequently during speeches. Humphrey knew he had to cross the line with President Johnson, but did not know when or how he should properly do it. Richard Nixon, during the summer of 1968 summed up Humphrey perfectly, "Humphrey's top problem is one that he cannot escape. He on his back carries the past. He is a candidate of the past, no matter how much he talks about his programs or the future."²⁶⁷

On August 8, 1968, Republican candidate Richard Nixon announced his running mate Spiro Agnew of Maryland. The following day President Johnson invited Humphrey to his Texas ranch for lunch. Humphrey took his eleventh draft of a speech concerning Vietnam and proposed it to President Johnson. Humphrey called for a bombing halt and for peace negotiations to begin. President Johnson responded by saying, "it was perfectly alright and you should not make a

²⁶⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 309.

²⁶⁶ Mondale, Walter. *The Good Fight: A Life in Liberal Politics*. 41.

²⁶⁷ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 6. Folder 4. Page 17.

statement about this publicly I will see if I can make the negotiations happen.”²⁶⁸ While on the campaign trail Humphrey learned that the negotiations did not go as planned and he was met with boos in Boston during a speech. That night he delivered his speech on Vietnam that he proposed to Johnson, but he was met with more bad news as a Gallup Poll showed him sixteen points behind Richard Nixon.²⁶⁹ Larry O’Brien called Senator Edward Kennedy to be Humphrey’s running mate, but he did not accept. Mondale and Freeman suggested that he resigns from the Vice Presidency to declare that he was his own candidate.²⁷⁰ Ultimately, Humphrey chose Edwin Muskie as his running mate. Humphrey picked Muskie to break away from the Johnson and Kennedy factions and declare himself as his own man.²⁷¹

The Vietnam War divided the generations, the Great Society divided the cities, and by 1968 the nation was ready for change. The nomination of Richard Nixon, a candidate that supported the war the possibility of withdrawal seemed unlikely. Rioting in Northern and Southern cities gave George Wallace some momentum heading into the election. The Democrats tried to secure votes by passing the Safe Streets Act in an attempted to gain a better grasp on law and order. Nixon’s decision to select Spiro Agnew was an attempt to sway voters from George Wallace as Agnew had a brutal stand on race disturbances and urban rioting.²⁷²

The 1968 Democratic National Convention became a catastrophe for the Democratic Party. The 1968 DNC was a liberals nightmare as they were met by thousands of young protestors from eighty three different antiwar committees to encourage change in 1968.²⁷³ From

²⁶⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 319.

²⁶⁹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 321.

²⁷⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 322.

²⁷¹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 6. Folder 8. Page 29.

²⁷² Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 4. Page 80.

²⁷³ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 357.

the beginning Humphrey knew he was in trouble. As his plane landed he was not met by any supporters, while McCarthy was met by nearly five thousand. However, Humphrey did not let the lack of support ruin his dream.²⁷⁴ Upon arriving at the Conrad Hilton Hotel Humphrey was meet by college age students screaming “We want Gene”. Humphrey met immediately with his Larry O’Brien and Walter Mondale to discuss a change of strategy. Chicago had strong support for Bobby Kennedy before his assassination, and Mayor Daley wanted his surviving brother Edward Kennedy to pursue the nomination. The thought of a Kennedy possibly joining the race scared Humphrey.²⁷⁵ Larry O’Brien called Kennedy and confirmed that he did not intent to run in 1968. Humphrey knew he had friends from Southern delegations and Lyndon Johnson might come to his aide in proposing the abolition of the unit rule. The unit rule required the entire vote of the state delegation to be casted as a unit for the majority of the group. Mondale announced that Humphrey’s call for abolition the same day that John Connally of Texas was expressing his support to Humphrey.²⁷⁶ The move by Mondale and Humphrey angered Connally. Humphrey spent most of the day telling Connally that he proposed abolition of the rule for in the future not at this very moment. The following day Connally called Southern governors who held 528 votes and told President Johnson to call Mayor Daley and have him withhold his endorsement until Monday or Tuesday.²⁷⁷

On August 26, Humphrey felt like it was payoff day. Humphrey received word from Lyndon Johnson that he did not like his plank of the Vietnam War and would not approve of it.

²⁷⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 338.

²⁷⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 341.

²⁷⁶ "PREPARING FOR THE 1968 CONVENTION." In *Madame Chair: A Political Autobiography of an Unintentional Pioneer*, edited by Sillitoe Linda, by Westwood Jean Miles and O’Neil Floyd A., 55-56. University Press of Colorado, 2007. doi:10.2307/j.ctt4cgq53.8.

²⁷⁷ Westwood, "PREPARING FOR THE 1968 CONVENTION." In *Madame Chair: A Political Autobiography of an Unintentional Pioneer*, page 57.

Humphrey still lacked the votes for nomination despite Ted Kennedy announcing that he would not consider running in 1968. Humphrey did not have a Vietnam War plank and had to run off of the Humphrey-Johnson plank. Humphrey found himself in an ironic situation. Twenty years earlier he was young and fiery as he challenged the South by declaring for the nation to get out of the shadows of states right and walk wholeheartedly into the bright sunshine of human rights. Twenty years later he finds himself searching for Southern support and cannot get out from under President Johnson.²⁷⁸ During the first day of the convention Humphrey expressed himself as a candidate not pursuing change. However, Humphrey did gain the support of the South after George McGovern called for peace in Vietnam.

The convention was far from over though, but Humphrey had the victory. The convention was far from over and Humphrey faced another difficult choice. Should he during his acceptance speech pull away from Johnson and deliver his own plank on the war? Larry O'Brien drafted a speech that Humphrey needed to present to break away from Johnson's shadow, after initially saying he would deliver the speech Humphrey decided against it.²⁷⁹ Humphrey declared doing so would not be an act of conviction, and would appear as a gimmick.²⁸⁰ Humphrey did not want to disappoint the President.

The National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam vowed to bring mass protestors to Chicago in hope of challenging candidates to change their stance on Vietnam. However, the organization threatened to cause mass corruption within the city leaving Mayor Daley and other top party officials on edge.²⁸¹ During the riots following the death of Martin Luther King Jr.

²⁷⁸ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 360.

²⁷⁹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 7. Folder 9. Page 119.

²⁸⁰ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 342.

²⁸¹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 363.

Mayor Daley felt that his police officers did not do enough to maintain peace. Shortly before midnight after the first day of the convention Mayor Daley had the police chase off protestors in Lincoln Park. The following night the crowd consisted of a thousand protestors the events repeated this time being caught on camera by the national media. On the third day things only got worse. David Dillinger the head of the organization tried to organize a march on the event. The young protestors were met by barricades of tear gas and mace. The protestors were chanting, “LBJ sucks”, “Dump the Hump”, “Daley sucks Hump”, among various other comments.²⁸² The violence escalated as the cops used brute force to stop the protestors from causing mass chaos within Chicago. Although no one was killed from injuries sustained during the conflict more than three hundred protestors were seriously hurt. Nearly eighty nine million people were watching the Democratic National convention and saw clips from the rioting. In theory, the events at the Chicago convention ruined the Democrats chances of winning the White House since they were unwilling to change their stance on Vietnam and portrayed the party as unstable.²⁸³ Humphrey selected Edmund Muskie as his running mate a man with contrasting styles to Humphrey, but was well respected.

After his nomination Humphrey was not sure where to begin his presidential campaign. He was advised not to start in Detroit as many auto workers were already supporting George Wallace.²⁸⁴ Humphrey figured he needed ten to fifteen million dollars to produce a quality campaign, but he had little financial support. The lack of financial backing was always Humphrey’s issue when he pursued the White House. Humphrey settled on launching his campaign in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania the same place he established his name twenty years

²⁸² Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 349.

²⁸³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 351.

²⁸⁴ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 352.

earlier. Humphrey was derailed at nearly every speaking engagement by college students who opposed the Democratic view on Vietnam. He later remarked, "I was always on the defensive and could never mount an attack Nixon."²⁸⁵ In late September, Larry O'Brien again proposed Humphrey to break away from Johnson, but did not have much success. O'Brien told Humphrey, "Let's face it we have already lost. You need to break away from Johnson if you have any hope of winning."²⁸⁶ Humphrey knew that Philadelphia was not the ideal starting point for his campaign. He knew traveling to Houston, Texas was not a good idea since it was essentially Lyndon Johnson's home. Lastly, Humphrey knew he needed to break away from Johnson, but could not break his loyalty.

During a conversation with Larry O'Brien in early October, Humphrey told him of three points he needed to make public knowledge if he wanted to win. First, he needed to declare that America did not want Richard Nixon.²⁸⁷ Humphrey knew that his policies could benefit the American economy and people vote with their pocketbooks.²⁸⁸ Lastly, Humphrey believed he could give the American citizenry peace as he would start to bring their boys home in phases.²⁸⁹ Again, Humphrey realized this was only possible if he split with Johnson, but he just could not do it. A late September Gallup Poll showed Humphrey nearly fifteen points behind Richard Nixon and only four points ahead of George Wallace.²⁹⁰ Humphrey was losing hope during his perusal of the White House. He made a statement to his wife on September 30 saying, "I'm not going to kill myself the next few weeks on the campaign trail. I will say whatever I want and see

²⁸⁵ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 8.

²⁸⁶ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 19.

²⁸⁷ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 27.

²⁸⁸ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 27.

²⁸⁹ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 27.

²⁹⁰ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 1. Page 51.

what happens.”²⁹¹ In early October, Humphrey did finally break away from Johnson during a national television broadcast where he delivered a speech that he considered a halfway speech separating himself from Johnson on the Vietnam issue.²⁹² Humphrey delivered his call for peace, the economy was booming with unemployment at two percent, the only goal left for Humphrey was to try and derail Nixon.

After his speech in Salt Lake City, Humphrey went in attack mode first on George Wallace. In Nashville and Knoxville, Tennessee Humphrey called Wallace a “political plunger” that depicted everything wrong with the United States since he was a racist.²⁹³ Humphrey also addressed Wallace’s stance on law and order despite the fact that Alabama had one of the highest murder rates. Humphrey also addressed Nixon’s southern strategy and accused him of being on the same side as Wallace. The year 1968, signified an end of an era as the economy that boomed since World War II began to balance out, the Vietnam conflict, and the domestic instability within the nation was spiraling out of control. Both men ran for the White House and lost previously. Nixon depicted himself as the candidate of the present. Humphrey portrayed himself as the underdog who finally broke from his friends shadow.

Much of Humphrey’s staff believed that he was too soft on law and order. To Humphrey, law and order mean putting blacks back in their spot. He spent the majority of his career fighting for civil rights he could not put an end to America’s Second Reconstruction. Nearly eighty nine percent of American’s wanted a president with a firm stance on law and order, but Humphrey would not budge on the issue. On the last day of campaigning the last Harris Poll showed

²⁹¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 368.

²⁹² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 384.

²⁹³ Hubert Humphrey Papers. 1968 Presidential Campaign. Box 9. Folder 6. Page 8.

Humphrey having a slight advantage of 42-40.²⁹⁴ Humphrey lost to Richard Nixon during the 1968 Presidential Election by a vote of 301-191.²⁹⁵ Humphrey won Minnesota, most of New England, Washington and Texas while losing the South to George Wallace and the West and Midwest to Richard Nixon.

After his defeat Humphrey published a book, *Beyond Civil Rights*, and held various autograph signings around the nation. Humphrey was set to make the most money of his entire political career. He was entitled to a nineteen thousand five hundred dollar pension for being Vice President, decided to return to Macalester College in Minnesota to teach political science for thirty thousand dollars a year, he agreed to teach part time at the University of Minnesota for ten thousand dollars a year, agreed to work for Britannica for seventy five thousand dollars a year, and signed a contract to make seventy thousand dollars for publishing his memoirs.²⁹⁶ Despite his influx of money Humphrey felt like it was just ashes in his mouth.²⁹⁷ Despite his financial success Humphrey did not seem the same as he was prior to his defeat. Everyone around Humphrey felt like he was a skeleton of himself.²⁹⁸ Humphrey did begin to dwindle his way back into politics as he started doing interviews with the *Minnesota Star Tribune* where he expressed his support for Nixon and his Vietnam policies.

In 1970, when Humphrey returned to the Senate he writing his memoirs and working on a book about foreign policy and considering running for president again in 1972. Humphrey decided to postpone his projects and return to the Senate. Immediately, Humphrey came up with

²⁹⁴ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 402.

²⁹⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, page 401.

²⁹⁶ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 412.

²⁹⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, page 422.

²⁹⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, page 425.

a plan for the next election. He believed that the Democrats needed to spend the next year surveying the field and rally behind just one candidate for the 1972 election.²⁹⁹ After his complicated views of Vietnam he was not allowed to serve on the Foreign Relations Committee and was also denied re-admission into Appropriations.³⁰⁰ Humphrey did not like his second stint in the Senate as much as his first since he felt it was too club oriented. Humphrey viewed Nixon's economic policies as detrimental to the United States and knew that the nation needed to keep hammering towards a solution.³⁰¹ With his relentless work in the Senate the media began to publish stories about Humphrey considering a campaign in 1972. Humphrey thought about potentially running for months. He knew Vietnam was his Achilles heel during his previous campaign and Nixon's handling of the economy was his own worst enemy. Humphrey now at age sixty always knew fundraising was his worst category, and decided to enter his name into the primaries. After the first polls were released Humphrey withdrew his name since news from 1968 and his handling of Vietnam came into the spotlight again.³⁰² During the Presidential Campaigns of 1972, Humphrey did continue to travel around the nation supporting George McGovern, but also checking his own support standings along the way.

In January 1972, Humphrey declared that he is in fact going to run for the presidency and used the campaign slogan "We the People" and declared, "that he is doing this for himself and no one else the time is now."³⁰³ He ran into the same issues as 1960 and 1968 his campaign was poorly organized and he was running out of money. He started losing in primaries in most notably in Florida, New York, and California and he knew then that he was still in Johnson's

²⁹⁹ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 423.

³⁰⁰ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 411.

³⁰¹ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 422.

³⁰² Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 426.

³⁰³ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 430.

shadow. Humphrey lost in the primaries to his protégé George McGovern. In January of 1973, Lyndon Johnson passed away and Humphrey applauded him for his work domestically. When the Watergate scandal broke Humphrey was affected as well when news when it became public knowledge of politicians tacky fundraising styles. While trying to avoid getting in trouble for his fundraising mistakes Humphrey went to the doctor for a biannual checkup where he found out he had bladder cancer. In April 1974, he was declared cancer free after X-ray treatments . In January 1975, Humphrey was presented with his only chairmanship in all of his years in the Senate with the Joint Economic Committee. In 1974, he also passed a bill that was weakened after his death called the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Bill. The Bill forced the nation to set the goal of only three percent unemployment rate nationwide and set the framework for how the United States should use political and economic growth to better the American life.³⁰⁴

Humphrey spent most of 1975 urging Walter Mondale to consider running for the presidency to only witness his own stock rise again since after Watergate there was not a strong candidate in sight for either party. On his sixty fourth birthday he was asked if he would consider running in for president in 1976. Humphrey responded, " Yes, indeed."³⁰⁵ In August, Humphrey became weary of the "Humphrey Boom", but he knew he was not in the best condition to consider running again or going through the hassle of fundraising. By October 176, Gallup polls were showing Humphrey as the leading candidate for the Democratic Nominee and President Ford was certain Humphrey would be his opponent. Humphrey remarked, "The longer I'm not a candidate the more support I get."³⁰⁶ Humphrey also declared, "that he has no intentions of running for office, but if no one accepts the parties nominee and I am forced to do so I will

³⁰⁴ Solberg, *Hubert Humphrey: A Biography*, 451.

³⁰⁵ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 477.

³⁰⁶ Offner, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country*, 452.

gladly accept.”³⁰⁷ Jimmy Carter of Georgia became the eventual candidate for 1976. On April 30, Humphrey officially announced that he was going to pursue the Democratic nomination. He knew his health could not withstand the rigor of another presidential bid. In October of 1976, Humphrey had to have emergency surgery where his bladder was removed and he was left with an external pouch. Humphrey spent much of 1977 recovering from his surgeries and publishing articles. His health continued to decline and in January of 1978, Humphrey began to talk about his funeral plans.³⁰⁸ A few days later Humphrey went into coma and peacefully passed away on January 13, 1978.

³⁰⁷ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 478.

³⁰⁸ Humphrey, *The Education of a Public Man*, 480.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Despite all of his accomplishments Humphrey never reached the Oval Office. Chapter one in conclusion, expresses different phases of Humphrey's life that built the foundation for his liberal political philosophy. Chapter one also focuses on how Humphrey despite adversity was always loyal to those he felt close to. His time in Louisiana laid the foundation for his stance on civil rights.

Chapter two focuses on his time as mayor. In conclusion he was not able to do completely get rid of crime within the city of Minneapolis, but he did prove himself to be an avid New Dealer and an enthusiastic politician. As mayor Humphrey laid the foundation for his plank on civil rights with his speech at the 1948 Democratic National Convention where he risked his entire career over the issue of civil rights.

Chapter three focuses on Humphrey's first eight years in the Senate in which he encountered numerous hardships with other members. Chapter three focuses on his ability to compromise with fellow Senators, how to gain Southern support, and making up for breaking Senate codes. Humphrey did have success to some degree since he was able to gain support for runner up in the 1960 Democratic primaries.

Chapter four examines Humphrey and his time as a master legislature. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was essential to Humphrey political career and put his name in the national spotlight. Humphrey became President Johnson's running mate in which their ticket won the election by a landslide. Despite Humphrey's elegant work on the civil rights bill he was not able to move past the Vice Presidency.

Chapter five looks at the relationship between Vice President Humphrey and President Lyndon Johnson. The two at this point were friends for over a decade and Johnson took Humphrey under his wing for the second time in their careers. However, Johnson's treatment of Humphrey during the Vice Presidency, especially over Vietnam, hurt their relationship going forward in politics. Vietnam became Achilles heel of the "Great Society."

The last chapter examines Humphrey's 1968 presidential campaign and his life afterwards. Humphrey failed to build an identity of his own. Many people in the United States viewed Humphrey as a Johnson protégé and not as his own man. Humphrey's inability to break away from Johnson during the election cost him dearly. After the election Humphrey did spend time writing his memoirs, returning to the Senate for another decade and indirectly considering another run at the presidency in 1972 and 1976. Humphrey thought he had an opportunity in 1972 and it would have been his year, but things did not turn out that way. In 1976 he nearly accepted his parties' nomination before they elected Jimmy Carter to their candidate. Even by then Humphrey knew that his health was not in the best of shape as he spent the majority of the next two years in the hospital.

Hubert Horatio Humphrey, passed away in January of 1978. Despite never making it into the Oval Office, all Americans owe something to him regardless of your generation. If you breathe fresh air or drink clean water then you owe something to Hubert Humphrey. His ability to remain loyal to the people around him despite countless letdowns and hindering his dreams tells the true character of one of America's greatest political minds. Humphrey's greatest masterpiece in the Senate was the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act effectively ending America's Second Reconstruction. Vice President Humphrey might be gone, but public service

career's impact is everlasting. Humphrey personified what it meant to be a liberal Democrat and he was a once in a generation political genius.

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VITA

DYLAN CODY MCNUTT

Education: Master of Arts in History, 2019.
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN

Bachelor of Science in History, 2016.
East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, TN

Professional Experience: Teaching Assistant 2017-2019
Department of History,
East Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN

Ohio Valley History Conference 2018
1968 Humphrey's Year to Shine