

*'Here I am,
warts and all'*

In these days of speechwriters, boards of campaign strategists and carefully calculated oratory, here is an unprecedented document. Hubert Humphrey, with typical and engaging openness, consented—in the fire of a presidential campaign—to spend several hours discussing himself. Speaking with startling candor and often with eloquence and passion, he talked his self-portrait. In this distillation, every word is Hubert Humphrey's. After reading it back the Vice President remarked, "I could have put in a lot of flattering adjectives, but as I used to say when I was running against Jack Kennedy in West Virginia, 'Here I am, warts and all.'"

Interview by Richard Meryman

HUBERT

Talks his self

I was sitting in the gallery of the Senate—I was 24, on my first visit to Washington, an idealist from the prairies, very romantic about government—and I remember seeing Huey Long come sort of swashbuckling across the Senate floor. He had on kind of an orange-brown suit. White-top shoes. I'd read, of course, how most people didn't like him. But I noticed every senator took notice of him. He was an attraction. No doubt about that.

On that trip I'd haunt the Library of Congress, poring over the letters of Madison and Washington. And at that time the White House grounds weren't so fenced off as they are today. One day I was so tired from walking that I started taking a nap on the grass there. A police officer had to come chase me away.

Since then, 20 years on the national scene. So many battles; so many issues. So many years of downfield blocking for Truman, for Kennedy, for Johnson. A leader of the opposition to Eisenhower. And you know what all that intensive political activity has gotten me today? Sure I'm the Democratic nominee. But there are also more darn people who can remember things they ought to be against me for. It's pretty hard to make a blocking right halfback into a stellar quarterback overnight.

If I was a different kind of a fellow, my situation could really get me down. I met recently with four governors. They told me they like me but I was too liberal. Within 10 miles, I'm sure there were people attacking me as part of the conservative establishment.

I'm often reminded that I was Jack Kennedy's opponent in the primaries of 1960—so I get another little black eye with people passionately for Kennedy. They don't remember I was his floor leader in the Senate—one of his close, inside operatives. Again, when you think of the Peace Corps, of the nuclear test-ban treaty, you think of John Kennedy. Yet I was the author of those things. I was never able to hold that identity. I was eclipsed by Kennedy's stronger presence. Then, as Vice President for four years, I simply could not be out in front. You may pick up some of the President's friends because they are *his* friends. But I've picked up his enemies in spades.

We've never been able to project my public relations too far, and I've never known why. I do know it is possible to build an image just like a home, laying out a blueprint. You have all kinds of polling done, and find out what people think of you. Then you work out what can we do about it—even to how you comb your hair, how you dress. I've done all that. You wouldn't believe it, but a fellow made a survey for me that showed that if I would wear glasses, it would improve my acceptance several percentage points.

Well, I don't like to wear glasses, and I figure it's a phony. Why in the name of common sense should I go around trying to improve my acceptance with the public on the basis of some horn-rims! I mean, it offends my sense of personal integrity.

People say I must attack people in order to prove myself my own man. Maybe that's what you're supposed to do these days. But that offends me. And ultimately I think people catch you up for it. I've suffered from doing some things that I ultimately thought I ought not to have done—and I know what it does to you. In politics if there isn't an inner peace—if there is duplicity, doubletalk, vacillation—your energies are rapidly eroded away. In fact, you may break up because the external pressures in politics are so great.

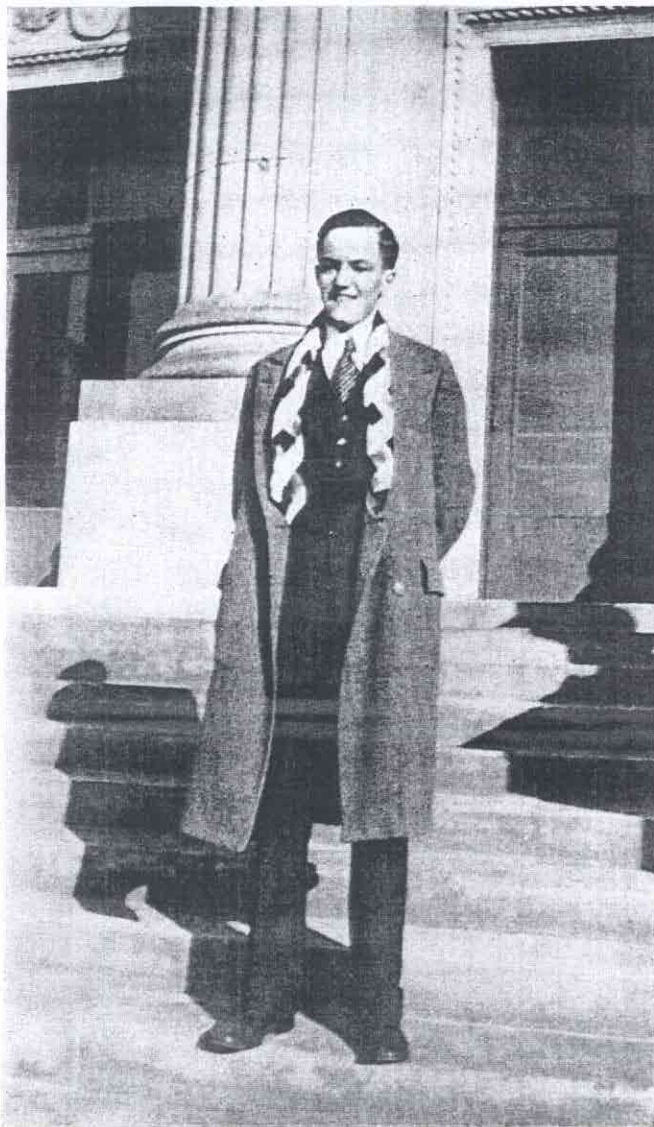
I don't think I'd ever have been elected to anything on the basis of how the so-called political experts and the commentators explained me to my people. I remember out of all the newspapers in the entire state of Minnesota—something over 250 weeklies, dailies and monthlies—there weren't 10% that would ever say a kind word for me. Mostly they'd write that I was, you know, radical, gabby, socialist—generally an irresponsible sort of fellow. I used to save those editorials. At Christmas time I would send a lot of them back to the editors saying that I'm sure you didn't mean what you said, but I wanted to let you know what you said in case you had forgotten. Merry Christmas. May you be forgiven.

I just wanted to touch them up a little bit. Even now when a man writes something I think is really unjust, he hears from me. I have a sense of personal integrity and pride. I don't intend to let people run over me just for the practice of it. I think if they get accustomed to it, they'll do it all the time. And one thing that the boys forget is that it isn't Hubert Humphrey against the world's best. It's Hubert Humphrey against the alternative.

Actually, when they're really out against you, it's better than just halfway because you can make something out of it. I used to go to town after town and put up my loud-speaker right in front of the newspaper editor's office. I'd read his editorials to the populace and say, "Here's what he wrote about me; let's see if he's got enough guts to come out here and say it out loud. I'm right here, right in front of your office, Mr. Editor. Come on out!"

Now I've read and been told that it would be better if I wasn't quite so positive, quite so energetic. Well, exuberance is part of my character, and for me to change it would be wrong. As a matter of fact, I'm always a little bit suspicious of these sleepyheads. I'm not sure but what the sleep goes through to the

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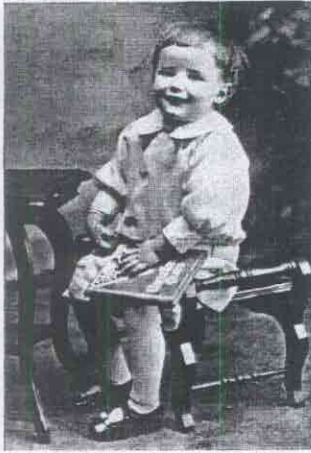


On his first trip to Washington in 1935, Humphrey stands on steps of National Archives Building

HUMPHREY

portrait

HUMPHREY



At 2, Hubert held an Uncle Tom's Cabin



The Humphrey children, Hubert Jr., Frances and Ralph, stood outside their Doland home in 1917

brain, I did four years of university work in three and a quarter years—with exuberance. In college I was the leader of my class, with exuberance. I graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa with exuberance. For three years I was a very exuberant college teacher of political science. In fact—though I'm never written up as such—I feel I am something of a scholar. I'm a man of a great deal of reading, a good deal of listening—and lots of talking—all of which I feel is part of the educational process. Just because a man smokes a pipe and looks out the window doesn't mean that he's doing anything else besides smoking a pipe and looking out the window.

There are just some people who are born evangelists and others who are just sort of nice, meditative monks. Me, I'm an advocate. That's been my life. If you believe in something, believe in it. On occasion I've tried going to a meeting and being low-gear. People say, "What's wrong? He doesn't seem to have the old spark." People want to be charged up. They come there, by golly, just waiting for a good shot of political hemoglobin right out of my veins.

Anyway, I like to talk. I've got lots on my mind; a lot of information. Get wound up; maybe talk too long. But it's these Washington political dinner-goers who want short speeches. They've got time for nothing. In my part of the country a speech is a social occasion—sit around, drink coffee—and they don't need a bottle of whisky on every table, either. I remember when Jack Kennedy spoke only 20 minutes at a dinner in Minnesota. The folks there thought he didn't like them. When Bob La Follette, the senior, spoke in Minneapolis, at the third hour he took his coat off.

A big reason, I think, that I seldom see in print what I feel I am is that those first impressions made early in your career become lasting impressions. Writers tend to look not at the person but at what has been written about him in the past. Early in my career, I was regarded by the Republican establishment as pretty much an interloper—an upstart.

In Minneapolis the powers—the press, the business leadership—were very satisfied with the comfortable Republicanism of Harold Stassen. He was their hero. I ultimately defeated his group—became mayor in 1945. Those were the happiest days of my public life, and I ultimately got the support of much of the business community. But I don't ever recall being invited in those early days to any of the nice big parties or the homes at Lake Minnetonka.

And when I arrived in Washington in 1948 as a U.S. senator, I was looked on there as a political accident, a flaming liberal, a very dangerous fellow. I had shaken up the Democratic party with the civil rights plank at the convention; I had defeated a very popular senator, Joseph Ball; I was the first Democratic senator elected from Minnesota in 100 years; I liked to get in there and mix it up; and, worst of all, I took Mr. Truman seriously. I can remember hearing one of the prominent Southern senators say, as I walked by, "How in blazes did the people of Minnesota ever elect that fellow?"

I believe most people have forgotten the bitterness toward Mr. Truman—far greater than the feeling against Mr. Johnson. The conservatives really laid it on me. I was called a Fabian socialist. And just to prove it, I was one of the architects of the Americans for Democratic Action and its national chairman. This was the consummate evil. There were very few who stood by Mr. Truman day in and day out. Even on his vetoes I would stand by him. I thought he had a good program. And I was that kind of a man.

What ultimately saved the day for me in the Senate was that I never let my politics get to the point where I had any personal an-

imosity with the other man. In fact, I really sort of enjoyed the ferocity of their attacks, particularly when I could join in the fight and come back at them.

I made up my mind that I was going to learn how to get things done. Senator Russell Long told me I should quit eating in the public dining room and go sit in that little private dining room around the big table where the Democratic powers of the Senate—the committee chairmen, the Southern leaders—Dick Russell, Walter George, Tom Connally, Allen Ellender—confided and talked in complete privacy.

Surprisingly, these men accepted me. I was frightened, wondering if I ought to be doing this, nervous that they'd leave me off in a corner. Mostly, I just listened, learning the mechanism that made the Senate work. And then I found Senator Lyndon Johnson—or he found me.

He worked very late and so did I. From time to time he'd call me up from his office in the Capitol and say, "Come on over. Let's have a drink and do a little visiting." And I'd drive with him when he went home. I never turned him down. I was his friend—and he needed somebody to bounce his ideas off of.

He put me in close contact with the chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator Walter George, who actually liked me. It was unheard of for a young senator to challenge the chairman of this powerful committee, but with Senator George's permission I managed to put through a couple of amendments. He told Senator Johnson, "That young fellow Humphrey has a lot on the ball. We ought to develop him." That was after three years in the Senate.

I had learned early that the liberals were always out speaking while the conservatives were in legislating. And it's in the subcom-

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HUMPHREY



In 1943 Humphrey was a political science teacher at Macalester College in St. Paul and the father of two, Nancy and Hubert H. III. In 1945, elected mayor of Minneapolis, he

mittees that 95% of the legislation is written, frequently by only three or four people. So I became a demon for committees. But I think my greatest achievement in politics was that I was one of the leaders who fought the conservative coalition of Republicans and Southerners year in and year out until they were slowly beaten down. I traveled up and down this country campaigning for every liberal I could, raising money for them, attending fundraising dinners. And I began to have a national constituency in the labor movement and the liberal movement.

I think liberalism in its New Deal days was essentially a quest for social security. Today I think it is the quest for social opportunity. The liberalism of the '30s was born out of fear of the Depression, out of a fear of what was considered the callousness and indifference of the social-economic system. The liberalism of the '70s will be the liberalism of individualism, of the right of the individual, even against the state, against big government, against big labor, against big business. Above all, it will be the right of the individual to be himself, to break away, to break out of the constraints that surround him—the constraint of the ghetto, the constraint of ignorance and illiteracy, the constraint of racism—the constraints which keep young people from participating in decisions which affect their lives. I would even like to free the Presidency from the White House—

conduct it for several months in Chicago, in San Francisco, in Seattle—so people would feel more contact with the government.

My liberalism has been one of advocacy on the one hand and a kind of pragmatism on the other. There are liberals today—very sincere, conscientious people—who believe it is better to fight for the great principle and lose than to make any concession to gain progress. If you get beginnings, you're bound to get something else. See, to me democracy is never to be decided by its endings—but by its beginnings. There is a kind of built-in momentum that comes because people see that the breakthrough does work. And there is a kind of simple pragmatism in the American people. They are a trial-and-error people.

I was brought up in a family that believed in change. I was born above a drugstore and literally reared in one—and we were constantly changing our window displays, our merchandising. We remodeled that store a dozen times. My father always had dreams—was always working for a bigger, better day ahead.

He was a happy man. Everything with zest. A man of real joy. Most people have a hero, and my father was mine. He simply expected me to be a leader. The truth is, I was just afraid and ashamed to disappoint him. Defeat just wasn't the way things ought to come

out. And he wouldn't tolerate any self-pity. Sickness, he said, is for people who have lots of time. Just don't be ill. And we weren't. To ever say I was tired would have been . . . well . . . rude.

We talked endlessly about everything, Dad and I. At midnight we'd close the store, get in the car—there was seven miles of pavement out of town—and we'd ride back and forth on that, listening to the news on the radio and talking. We'd stop for coffee, and then at home talk some more. At 7 the next morning, we'd open the store again. On Sundays we'd have a house full of people—and more conversation. Dad loved controversy. We all used to sit around the table and he'd put an agnostic right alongside the local Catholic priest.

During the Depression we moved our drugstore from Doland, S. Dak. to Huron. The banks had closed in 1926. The farmers didn't have a crop from 1927 to 1938—and we depended on agriculture. Next door the Johnson department store went bankrupt. Dad hung on. We sold pianos; we sold paint and wallpaper. I can measure up a room today and tell you how many rolls it's going to take. We sold veterinary products, and I learned how to vaccinate hogs. I could throw an old 300-pound sow right on her back. I scaled dozens of barns putting up those old aerials for the radios we sold. We sold phonographs and records—and Dad would always order too many classical records. That way he could take them home and tell my mother they just hadn't sold—and she couldn't argue about affording them.

In the Depression Dad canceled everybody's bill. He told me, "These are proud people,



took over a corrupt, wide-open city and cleaned it up—losing, however, none of his ebullience: above, wearing a crepe-paper lei, he leads the police band at a grocers' picnic.

Hubert, and they will never come into this store as long as they owe us money." If somebody with a prescription couldn't pay, he'd give the medicine away. I thought he wasn't being a very good businessman. "Young man," he said, "if we go broke and there's even two ounces gone from a two-gallon bottle, for all practical purposes that bottle is worthless. So I'd rather give medicine away. And if this country ever comes back, every prescription we give away now will come back to us 100-fold."

My father got me a little book by Woodrow Wilson entitled *When a Man Comes to Himself*. I keep a copy of it on my desk at the Capitol. Wilson points out that there's a time in a man's life when he's at the apex—when everything sort of synchronizes—total physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual harmony. Then my father used to tell me, the task of a man is to put himself in harmony with God, with nature. The universe is energy. You have to get yourself so that you tune in on that energy. When you do, you'll have tremendous vitality. It will be just like an electrical system without static. Interesting.

The day I took my oath as senator, Dad was there. It was the fulfillment of everything he wanted in life. Mr. Truman's secretary had asked, "What can we do for you, Senator?" Well, I asked if my father and mother could

visit the White House. Dad loved politics, loved the Democratic party, had served in the state legislature. Mr. Truman took two hours with them—was so nice to my mother, he never could have done anything wrong as far as I was concerned.

I loved the Senate—and might run for it again someday. I don't think there's a greater body of men in the world. To show you the kind of relations we had—during the civil rights bill in 1964 we had to have a quorum at all times. Any time we didn't have a quorum the opposition could move to adjourn, it would be a new legislative day, and we'd have to start all over again—and we'd never break the Southern filibuster. And when there was going to be a quorum call, we had to have a majority present. Once in a while one of our supporters just had to be away. If I couldn't get a pro-civil rights replacement, I was able to ask a Southerner as a favor to answer the quorum call and prevent an adjournment—or if it was a vote, to absent himself, thereby balancing off the vote I was losing.

I was in charge of the passage of that bill—and am very proud of that. This was really the first time since the Reconstruction that Congress had implemented the constitutional provisions of equal rights. And I am very proud of the fact that there was never any rancor afterward. Every day for four months I spent 12 and 15 hours on the floor. If there was any sign of a personal attack between senators, I'd immediately interrupt it.

The last week of debate my wife telephoned me. My boy, Robert, had some lumps in his neck and he had gone to the hospital to have them checked. Muriel told me he had cancer of the lymphatic glands. I want to tell you, when I went back to the floor of the Senate I could hardly contain myself. Of course, I dreamed the worst. It was ex-

actly as if I'd been hit in the head with an iron hammer.

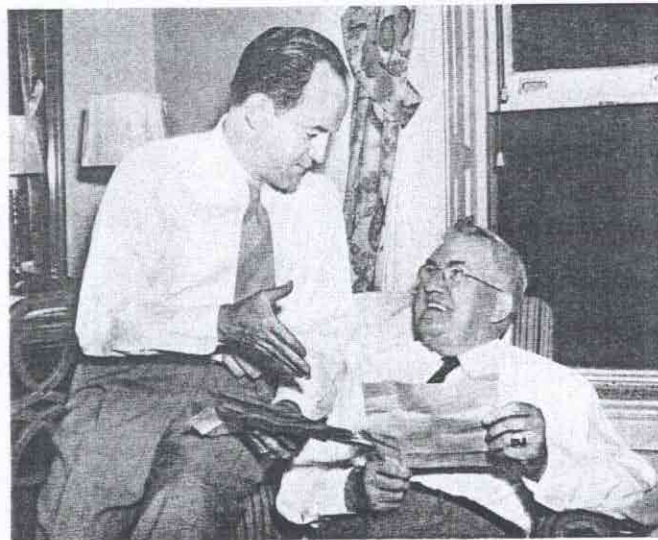
Well, it was a matter of personal life or public life. The boy was in the best possible hands, his mother was there—but I knew I should be there too. I was in a terrible agony of a kind of selfish guilt. But I knew if I walked away from that floor, we might lose the legislation. There were over 200 amendments pending for that bill. I was the only man who knew the whole history of the bill, knew all the amendments—and one little slip and we'd be gone. We had to defeat every amendment—some of which were very attractive—but once you open up that Pandora's box, there's no end to it. Every guy wants his amendment, and then, pretty soon, it all starts to unravel.

The next day Robert had his operation and I talked to him on the telephone. I'm still in this big debate—my mind constantly flashing off to him. I said, "Well, son, everything is going to be all right." He said to me, "Dad, you don't need to kid me. I know what I've got. It isn't all right." I just about collapsed.

We passed the bill. So much pleasure on top of so much pain. It sharpens both—brings out the tartness of life. And now, thank the Lord, Robert is fine.

You know, one thing that has made politics a privilege to me, made it so exciting, is the chance it afforded for friendships with the great leaders of my time. That's the way I feel about Lyndon Johnson. I loved Jack Kennedy. I really did. Like a lot of people, I didn't realize how much until the day of his assassination—the sudden void—what it had meant for me to have participated in the beautiful dream and vision he had for this nation.

When Muriel and I got the news, we were lunching at the Chilean embassy. As we went to the car I said to Muriel, "Mama, Lyndon is going to need me. He's going to be under a great strain." I went to the



Humphrey and his father were close to each other—and proud of each other. Hubert Sr., influential in state politics, gave up a chance to run for governor so his son could go back to college near the end of the Depression.

HUMPHREY

White House, every minute on the edge of tears. When I saw Kenny O'Donnell, I wept openly. Then I walked alone in the rose garden for a long time.

That assassination, then Martin Luther King, and then Bobby Kennedy—these things have soured the whole political atmosphere, made the politics of our country sad and miserable. I try to buoy them up as much as I can...but...

I was never a close friend of Robert Kennedy. He was very difficult for many of us to understand—far more compassionate than his critics gave him credit for. Our relationship was cordial, honorable. We had always planned to get together after the California primary. If it appeared he wasn't going any-

of wit was a little better, my arguments were a little better—which demonstrates to me that you can always reach a higher pinnacle in the company of people who compel you by their quality to reach up.

We were very different, but that, I think, made the friendship all the more enjoyable. I am an effervescent man—the Midwestern, rambunctious type. My friends have always been in the labor movement, business, political life. Adlai was the introvert, an aristocrat, scintillating, at least outwardly more philosophical. When he'd get tired and despondent, he always found me quite refreshing. I offered him a change of pace and my comment with him was oftentimes earthy. And perhaps it's immodest for me to

prevent detailed discussion always offended Adlai. As a public man you are talking to the people: not one or two people. You have to find common denominators, a language that gets to a large number of people. I believe with Theodore Roosevelt that there is no select minority that has as much basic good judgment and wisdom as any majority. Adlai was maybe too good for politics. It doesn't always require that you have your discussions in the parlor. It requires sometimes that you have a knock-down drag-out in the back alley. And you deal with some very peculiar people on occasion because politics is another word for power. You are engaged in the accumulation of power and its application—and things can get out of control. I haven't always had a full stomach for that, either, and I think you do: reach full maturity in politics until you realize that the ultimate discipline is restraint in the use of power.

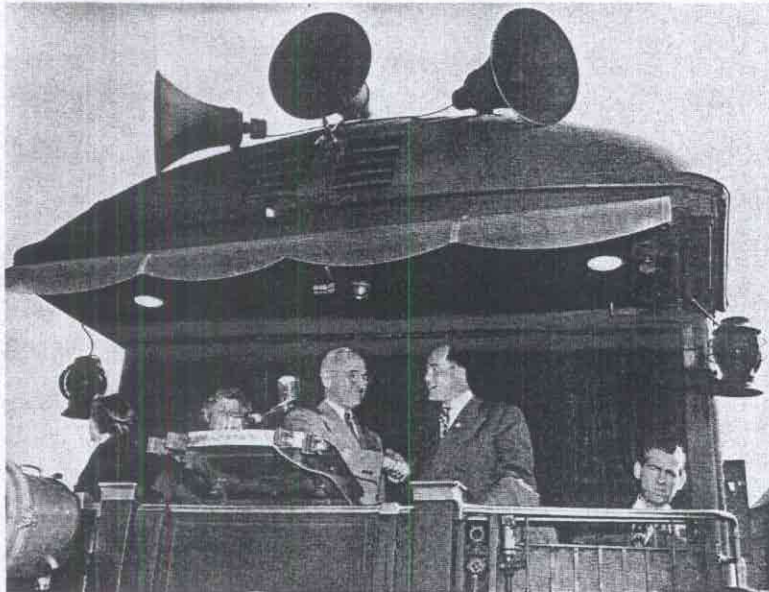
In 1956 I thought Adlai offered me the vice presidential nomination. But looking back on it—there was an "if" I didn't hear distinctly. Perhaps I didn't want to hear it. He said, "... if you can get enough support." Well, Estes Kefauver and Jack Kennedy weighed in with big blocks of support. Adlai just couldn't deliver it to me. So he threw open the convention.

It would have been better if he'd told me before he did it. But I'm very forgiving in politics. Boy, oh, boy, do you get busy. And there is no work in the world in which people stab you and cut you up more than in politics. If you're going to put a Band-Aid on every cut and put the name of the person on it—you're going to go around looking like a mummy. You have to forget, or your heart and spirit become so encased in scar tissue that you are no longer sensitive to what is really going on. You engage in the politics of vindication—and your cause is lost. Very few people are ever interested in seeing that you are vindicated.

I often think, these days, of an afternoon I spent with Adlai in Bill Benton's apartment in New York. Adlai was trying to decide whether to accept the post of U.N. Ambassador in the Kennedy administration. I'd had a telephone call from Lyndon Johnson telling me I would probably be the majority whip. I listened to Adlai's doubts about the direction the new Administration would take. Then I really went after him. "I'm ashamed of you for even hesitating," I said. "Listen, Adlai, did you campaign for John Kennedy?" "Yes, I did," he said. "Well," I said, "I did too. And we told the people he would be good for this country. Did you mean it?" "Of course," he said. "Then when he asks us to serve, we must serve. A lot of people voted for John Kennedy because they believed in you."

"Well," he said, "let's talk about you. If you take that job of majority whip, you're not going to be free, you can't speak out as you'd like to, call the shots. This, in a very real sense, will limit your possibilities of ever becoming President." You know, we had an argument for an hour on whether, if I took that responsibility, I could be my own man.

But I am a Wilsonian type of Democrat who believes in the caucus system—that there ought to be some sense of party regularity and party discipline to help a President carry through his program. This is simply part of good government.



Running for Senate in 1948, Humphrey on Truman campaign train greeted the man he much admired

place, he would make the necessary arrangements, adjustments. And, of course, the same went for me.

Something Jack Kennedy once said gives me more encouragement today than any other single thing. When I was opposing him in the West Virginia presidential primary in 1960, we would meet in the Senate and talk. One time—I've never mentioned this to a living mortal—we were sitting alone two rows back from the front of the Senate. The newsmen were all up there looking down, wondering what these two guys were talking about. Jack said, "You know, Hubert, if you could get the nomination, you'd be the strongest candidate. You'd whip Nixon. But you can't get the nomination. I think I can."

My friendship with Adlai Stevenson started in 1948 during my campaign. I always felt a little brighter when I was with Adlai—my sense

say it, but I believe he thought I had talents.

Adlai labored at politics, rather than being sort of buoyed up by it. He had a feeling that it was a very worthwhile experience, yet he wished it didn't have to happen to him. To me, politics is exciting. It is about what people do—how they react—how you can get them to act. It forces a self-discipline, yet satisfies all kinds of urges, yearnings, ego—whatever. It's a chance to be creative, to make history.

Adlai didn't like crowds; he really hated this mauling you have to take. Me—I go to a meeting so tired I ache, and I see that audience and I feel like some kind of a vampire. I just suck strength up from them. I'm an intimate politician. That's why it's hard for me to get any joy from using the mass media—like television. I don't see anybody but that camera.

I think the simplicities of politics which

I'm sure Adlai felt the same way about my taking the Vice Presidency. But I haven't regretted it for one day. First, I'm a sentimentalist about the Presidency, about Washington as the seat of government. When I go into the White House—go by the Lincoln Memorial or the Washington Monument—I'm moved, really moved. A terrific sense of the history of our country sweeps over me. Sometimes I actually get goose pimples. But if they ever stop, I want somebody to dump me in the Potomac River. I'm dead and I've just been cheating the mortician. Secondly, as Vice President I've come to feel—like the book by Wilson—a deep sense of confidence that my time has come. I am a student of government, and I have learned more than I ever dreamed possible about the workings of our government. On the highest level I have been part—though admittedly peripheral—of the decision-making process of our nation.

And I want to tell you about that. At the National Security Council meetings, President Johnson is the most amazing man. There is just no way of knowing what he is thinking. You cannot cozy up to him and agree with him and be a nice fellow—none of that. He describes the situation. Here is the best information we have. The Central Intelligence Agency director will read it. The Chief of Staff will tell you the military situation. Here are the alternatives. What should we do? Are there any other alternatives? The President goes right around the table. At the very end, it is, "Mr. Vice President, what are your views?"

I don't think there has ever been unanimity. Sometimes I've found that I'd taken a position entirely different from the President's. There were occasions when I would agree with George Ball—and if you want to call somebody a dove on Vietnam, he's a dove. George Ball would always be invited to the meetings to present his alternatives as persuasively as possible. And the President always wanted to be cautious. I remember, discussing Haiphong, he said, "It would be just my luck to have some bomber go in there with a boy from Johnson City, Texas in the pilot's seat and drop a bomb right down the smokestack of a Soviet ship."

I think Vietnam dramatizes just how awkward the office of Vice President is. It is filled with responsibility, and whatever authority you have is delegated by the President. So you just coordinate programs—hold the house together—but anything you say is taken very seriously all over the world. I spoke up the other day just a teeny weeny bit, defining what I considered to be a good free election in Vietnam. Well, I look at all the cables that come in and, bango, I've shaken the woodwork. Every government, not just South Vietnam but all our allies—the Australians, New Zealanders, Filipinos, Koreans—they all say, "What's Humphrey talking about? Is this what the Americans are thinking about?" Harriman came on home and cautioned against too much talk. "We've got some serious negotiations under way. Be careful." Nobody worries what a senator says. They're not part of the Administration.

I think what's going to determine Vietnam for me is events, not words. And I think events are on my side. I think North Vietnam

has had it militarily; they cannot possibly succeed, and I think that ultimately they have to come to some kind of a settlement.

I know I've been severely criticized for being "enthusiastically optimistic" when I came back from Vietnam the first time in 1966. I think "cautious optimism" better describes it. I did believe the military situation was appreciably better—and I still do—but at the time not better enough in a short enough period to make my statements seem credible. And you know, when you are in conflict—in the heat of argument—you become a little more firm and enthusiastic than if you are just sitting around a table and can say, "Well, you have a point there," and discuss it.

And it was very bad for me that the writ-

to justify deployment of armed forces in Vietnam. I was one of the floor leaders of that resolution. Before the vote, two senators—Gene McCarthy and Frank Church—asked me what does it mean. I said, "It means that the President is hereby authorized to take whatever measures are necessary, including the use of the armed forces, to repel aggression in Vietnam." Then Frank Church asked, "Does that mean the possibility of troops on the land mass of Asia?" The answer was, "It does." So everybody knew what the contract was.

The point is, it's sort of like buying a house. You sign up for it; you can't make the payments; the hail knocks the shingles off; the well goes dry—and you say, "Ugh, I wish to God I'd never signed up for it." I think



A devoted supporter of Adlai Stevenson, Humphrey huddled with the candidate at the 1952 convention

ten report I gave the government was never published. It would have made me look good. I pointed out the problem of corruption in government, the necessity to broaden the base of government, the necessity of changes in the Vietnam corps commanders, the necessity of arming the ARVN with modern weapons and intensively training the Vietnamese troops so their role could be greater. I said I thought Thieu was ultimately the stronger man. Ky had temporary popularity, but Thieu was more of the Oriental; he rode out the storms, was slow, was Eastern, knew how to hang on. But these reports would have appeared critical of our war effort, so the Administration said, we'll take them in-house and do something about them in-house.

Now possibly a mistake was made in continuing to use the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

that, say, in 1966, when we got away from just airpower and 100,000 troops, when we were up to 350,000 troops and had ourselves a first-class war—then I think we should have renegotiated the contract. Really racked it up to Congress, a full-scale debate. And if the elected representatives of the people said get out, we'd have gotten out. But they wouldn't have. And they wouldn't do it right now.

Secondly, we never ever explained the war really in depth, its relationship not only to our own security but to all of Asia, its historical relationship. Even if it wasn't a good case—at least it should have been made. We've always tidbitted it—a press conference, somebody returns. I know Rusk has explained everything a great deal—but that's not the President.

But I am simply not going to act apologetic for supporting the President's Vietnam

HUMPHREY

policy. Politics is a special form of human relations. It's not just machinery, it's not just dogma and doctrine—it's people. I think the qualities in politics that are really enduring are loyalty and political integrity—giving your word and keeping it. Everything is built on that. For example, in the Senate, a man says I'll vote for you—all your calculations are made on that. Nobody says he has to commit, but when he does, it's like at a tobacco auction or a cattle auction. You put your finger up, blink your eye, and that's as binding as any written contract. I sense some people these days feel it's all right to shift grounds as long as you tell the other fellow you're changing.

Most men who succeed in politics have intense personal loyalties. When the going is rough, if you don't have those mutual loyalties, you're going to be out there all by

yourself, and there are wolves coming out of the woods chewing at you. They'll just consume you if you don't have a little group of guardians.

I think you can make a reasonable case for this Administration in Vietnam, and there is a really great record everywhere else. But I think maybe the biggest political mistake this Administration has made is to assume that the public can follow you program by program. We've started so many programs—wonderful ones—proliferated a thousand and one ideas across the scene—so that now people aren't sure just where you are. People vote because of attitudes, a feeling. They can't take on complex answers. The best you can do is get one general idea fixed in the minds of the public—that you care about old people, you care about youth, about the consumer.

Mr. Johnson hasn't managed to do that.

The Democrats are going into this campaign saying we've got a big supermarket with lots of goods. But there's too darn few willing to be salesmen. There just aren't enough Administration people really touring the country, defending the programs they have fought for and gotten through this Congress.

Now, I know, of course, that we have serious problems in this country. We've been trying to get peace in Vietnam for years, and we still haven't got it. We've been trying to build a society in which there is respect for human dignity, and we're a long way from achieving it. The average rural American gets a ninth-grade education. The city boy, even in the slums, gets a high school education. The chance of a Negro baby living to 65 is half the chance of a white baby. A Negro

Flying home from the Chicago convention, Muriel Humphrey helps her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Hubert III, by feeding granddaughter Pamela



mother has three times the chance of her baby dying at birth than a white mother. For every 200,000 young men in American agriculture there are only 100,000 jobs. You can spend your whole day citing things like that.

But I don't think you gain the strength you need to wage the battle against these problems by whining around about how bad everything is and how you can't win. As I told some congressmen the other day—you can go around and tell everybody that you've done nothing and everything's terrible. And you know what Mr. Nixon and the Republicans are going to say? They'll say, "You're right. Nothing has been done. Send us down to Washington!"

Dissent and pessimism have been char-

acteristic of every period of drastic change. In the great periods of the history of our country, most people were predicting it was the end of the line. The only time they said things were good was when they were bad. In the 1920s. Well, in the last 10 years we've had more changes in this country than in the past 100. The news of America is its capacity to adjust to these changes. We've built the most incredible, resilient social structure the world has ever known. And I think we're at the end of an epoch and coming into a new one—in science and technology, in race relations, in foreign policy, in economic policy and structure.

You know, this business of the politics of joy—I get a lot of razzing on that. Well, I don't believe in ducking. I think there is joy in politics. I think there's joy in family. I think

there's joy in my job. I think there's joy in American citizenship. When I see my little grandchild, Vicky, who's retarded, sure there's sorrow—but within her limits she's doing very well—there's great joy in that. So what's wrong with that? That's the whole purpose of life.

A few intellectual snobs—they want me to be some kind of a sourpuss. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—they ridicule it. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—that's what we're trying to do. That's the purpose of this country. When we go in and try to help a little child in a Project Head Start or get her a better school or help the parents become self-sustaining citizens—is that just for statistical purposes? Is that all it's for? I don't think so. I think the politics of happiness is a wonderful phrase.

In Waverly, Minn., Hubert Humphrey fondly tussles with his daughter's children—Vicky and Jill

