

# THE VOICE



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## Speech of M. E. ... Nationally Known Business Executive ... Firm of Bozell & Jacobs, Omaha, Nebraska

MY FRIENDS, I think I have the solution of the inter-racial problem. It is as simple as all that.

Just yesterday, while speeding from New York to Omaha at about 375 miles an hour in order to be here for this important occasion, I discovered the solution to the inter-racial problem. As I sat in that airplane 14,000 feet above the ground, speeding west, I could take a good look down on this earth...with its people, its buildings, its homes, its strife, its prejudices.

And looking way down here from way up there, one couldn't help but have a different perspective—a wholesome perspective. Why shouldn't one, when the only thing between you and the hereafter are a few pieces of man-built mechanism, over which you yourself have no control?

From way up there looking down, one couldn't help but wonder what it was all about; why there should be occasion for religious and racial hatreds in the world below, when we have, at best, such little time living together.

What little difference there is between race, creed and color, when one's individual life isn't very important. How little difference there is, for example, when men are fighting for their lives on the battlefields. Amidst the shot and shell, when men's lives hang in the balance, there isn't any thought given to the race, creed or religion of the buddy fighting by one's side. Then true values and worth count and are accepted at 100 per cent face value. The inside of man counts them; not the color of his skin or the method he uses to pray to his God. When Eddie Rickenbacher an his companions were striving to stay afloat and alive in a raft at sea, Rickenbacher said every man counted as an individual. No one wondered then about skin color and creed. The everlasting unity and co-operation was needed for survival, and what mattered one's color or religious views. There are no race barriers...no creed carriers...there is no intolerance at times when the individual suddenly discovers the importance of unity and understanding and cooperation among those about him for his own individual survival.

Perhaps that's why I felt as I did, way up there in the sky, buffeted about by strong winds and tossed from airpocket to airpocket. Yes, the complexities of life seemed easy of solution way up there. I couldn't help but think that proper understanding could be won by taking the intolerant, and the prejudiced, and yes, the pedlers of hate and strife, and placing them in a large airplane. Then take them up 20,000 feet toward the heavens kill off three of the four motors, and let them contemplate. I think these people would quickly realize that one's individual life, as important as it is, takes on greater importance when all strive together for the rights and betterment of all.

Sure, that which I have portrayed borders on the allegorical...something surrealistic. But the solution of the problem, my friends, would be simple if it were possible to tear away the fakery, the ignorance, the hate,

the greed, the jealousies, yes, the inferiority complexes of frightened people and yet our democracy stand as it was supposed to be...unadulterated...sincere...all equal before all.

**UNFORTUNATELY, AS WE ALL KNOW,** that can't be done as simply as the words are said. But there must be a solution...there has to be. So what, then, do the experts say...we of public relations and advertising...who get paid in the currency of the realm—too much, say some of our clients—for getting out guide posts for the selling of ideas, ideologies...beliefs, as well as material things.

Too often, I believe, the mistake is made in selling a way of life, or a belief, in appealing to the individual to buy the idea or belief because it is the fair thing to do...the decent thing to do...because it is the right and the humanitarian thing to do.

I am sure, my friends, you have already grasped the idea that although I aim to be of service to my fellowman, I still remain realistic for I don't care what type the approach takes...be it an appeal to the idealistic or the selfish side of man, the solution is more important than style of approach. To get the job done, without sacrifice of principle or dignity, is my aim.

**DO YOU KNOW ANY MISSIONARIES?** Ask them how they sell their religious beliefs. They don't appeal alone to the esthetic sense...or the sense of righteousness. They drive into the minds of the prospects for conversion the personal benefits involved...what their salvation will mean to them personally. I say without hesitation there is nothing wrong or sacrilegious in that approach. The man is won over to God and he, personally, benefits through his salvation.

Even among us...what do people, in most instances, pray for? They pray for health...for happiness...they pray to be kept from plagues and famines...they even pray for rain...all appeals for personal benefits!

That is why I say it could be that the approach to this problem, to win greater interest and understanding, might be wrong. Let us take a professional look.

Instead of telling Mr. John Q. Public that he should be more tolerant, more understanding, more cooperative because it is the fair, honest and decent thing to do...and we must admit this approach hasn't worked well up-to-date...perhaps it might be best to start selling Mr. Public on the fact that he should do it because of what it means to him...his family and all others about him...in benefits...benefits of value to him personally. And the best part of it is, there are a multitude of personal benefits involved.

When I refer to valued personal benefits, I am not referring solely to financial or commercial advantages expressed and emphasized when approaches are made to industrial and business heads to cooperate in the Urban League program. I know of the type of approach made by your League in connection with locating and upgrading of employment

...and I believe in it, for I think, as I have already stated, you have the right to appeal to the selfish, financial, or other side of man or industry, if that will help solve the problem.

When I referred to valued personal benefits, I meant better and happier living; greater national unity, of greater importance now to every person than ever before, during these days of world strife; a better country for each person to enjoy.

Remember Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls—"Every man's death diminishes me for I am involved, so never send to know for whom the bell tolls: the bell tolls for thee."

Too many people can't understand that no one suffers alone; when one diminishes another, he diminishes himself. When a person participates in destroying the dignity of another, he is degrading himself and, thereby, degrading his community and his country. Everyone suffers.

**When a Negro, holding a master's degree, has to take employment as a porter, it diminishes me, and it diminishes everyone else. For only by building higher the standards of living for all, can I hope to upgrade and make truly secure my own standards.**

**I HAVE BEEN ADVISED** that in the last two years nine out of ten of Negro college educated youth who have been trained in our local and state universities at the taxpayers' expense have left Omaha and have gone to other communities where they can make their contributions. Omaha and the people of Omaha can ill afford to lose these well-trained, well educated citizens. When the Negro community loses these fine people, educated at the taxpayers' expense, every person in this entire community loses, directly and indirectly. Yes, it even effects directly the cash registers of the business and industrial institutions.

We have community losses, too, as a result of the disproportionate relief, crime, and health costs, the result of social pressures so far as jobs, housing, and educational opportunities are concerned.

**A CITY IS JUST AS GOOD** as the contributions each of its citizens has an opportunity to make. There is a very strong correlation between the extent of discrimination in a community and the standard of living for all people in the community as evidenced by the Southern states, which fall at the lower end of the scale in standards of living. Only through integration can suspicions and hostilities be removed, because people can only understand each other when they know each other.

**I need not remind you of the tremendous loss in international prestige and the suspicions created in the minds of two-thirds of the world's population who happen to be non-white because of the continuation of the treatment accorded our Negro citizens.**

Just think of the price we are paying now to protect precious freedoms and liberty. A tremendous price of American lives is being paid to protect the freedoms of people throughout the world. We proclaim that communism is a dangerous threat to our American freedoms and individual rights. We are willing to send our young men to battle, even to death, to all parts of the world, to make secure these freedoms for others, so that we may make our rights more secure. But what about the freedoms at home? To make safe the freedoms throughout the world we must make safe the freedoms for all races, creeds

### Rev. Rucker Dies In Lincoln

Rev. Thomas Rucker, 73, of Omaha, a retired army captain, died Wednesday in Lincoln. Rev. Rucker lived in Omaha 35 years where he was assistant pastor of St. John A.M.E. church. Funeral service and burial was in Omaha.

and religions at home, in our own country.

We can do so only by a united front, built on a foundation of equal rights and freedoms, for all Americans. Otherwise we might win on a foreign battlefield and lose the battle for a true democracy at home. If we don't win the battle of freedoms and equal rights at home, we will weaken the structure of our own democracy, which is today the fountain-head of world democracy.

We must wipe out any source which strenghtens the ideologies of communism which might bring about the loss of our own freedoms and rights, regardless whether it be in Korea, or Europe, or at 24th and Lake Streets, or at 16th and Farnam Streets.

**DISCONTENT AND FURSTRATION** opens the doors of the mind to the appeals of destructive agitators; it can't help but make foreign ideologies appear more attractive. Too many of us, who fortunately are able to enjoy the full freedoms our country offers, take for granted these freedoms, not realizing or appreciating fully that these freedoms can be kept absolutely secure for ourselves only by making these same freedoms and rights possible for every American citizen, regardless of race, creed, religion, or color.

**And in my humble opinion,** never before in the history of our country has there been as great a need for unity and understanding on the part of all of the people of our country for the protection of our American freedoms, our American institutions, our way of life yes, our free enterprise system upon which rests our complete American economy. But for our free enterprise system to be secure always, to continue strong always, not some Americans must be given equal opportunities to obtain its benefits.

So, my friends, others than Negroes must be convinced that this racial problem is not a Negro problem; it is a community problem.

It is a problem, in whose solution, rests great benefits and values for all Americans. Full democratic participation by all of our citizens benefits all of our citizens.

Can you understand now why I stated, at the outset, that perhaps the wrong approach has been made to win the minds and hearts of the people? Can you understand now why I quoted from Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls?" For only by building can we improve our own position, and receive the benefits. Only by upgrading, rather than undergrading our fellowmen do we upgrade our own living standards and receive the benefits. Because when the bell tolls for you, and you, it tolls for me also. No one can diminish another without diminishing himself and those about him.

**WE ALL KNOW** that in the main, prejudice against a particular race or creed is the result

### Sen. Adams' Plea Fails to Revive F.E.P. Measure

Nebraska Legislators refused to resurrect LB 69, the Fair Employment Practice Bill which was introduced by Sen. John Adams.

The vote was 13 to 4 to raise the bill killed by the labor committee. Twenty-six members did not vote. Twenty-two votes are necessary to raise a bill killed by committee.

**SEN. JOHN ADAMS** of Omaha, the legislature's only Negro, made an impassioned, half-hour speech in behalf of his L.B.-69.

"My motion asks that you give working men a chance to work, wage earners a chance to maintain in dignity their homes," he pleaded.

The senator called his colleagues' attention to a resolution passed by the 1949 legislature calling for a legislative council study of F.E.P. legislation.

**THE COUNCIL** committee found that there were unfair employment practices in the state and recommended "home rule" legislation to curb them.

He called opposition to bills like his "antiquated, unreasonable, flagrantly immoral, against the teachings of science, abject blindness toward the trend of present-day civilization, contrary to good Americanism and, in a cosmopolitan melting pot such as ours, absolutely destructive of democratic intentions, establishments and ends hoped for."

**THE VOTE** on Adams' motion to raise the bill:

For—		
J. Adams	Hill	Tvrdek
T. Adams	Klaver	Williams
Burney	Larkin	Wilson
Carmody	Moulton	
Carmer	Syas	
Against—		
Hoyt	Nelson	Pizer
McKnight		

mainly of lack of opportunities for personal contact and acquaintanceship; lack of understanding; or a natural apathy—and unfortunately, in too many instances, just plain ignorance.

But I can't help but wonder sometimes whether it wouldn't make for greater progress in racial unity in this country, if we declared the adult citizenship a total loss from the standpoint of inter-racial education and understanding, and concentrated all of the energy, all of the planning, and all of the expenditures on programming among the youth. Action might be delayed for a few years; we might lose the greater part of one generation, but for the long range pull it might be the best thing to do.

No—we can't do that, can we?

**We Americans seek action now;** we are an impatient people; we won't wait that long to hear the cash register of human betterment ring. And also perhaps there are some among the adults to whom we can deliver inter-racial salvation, so let's carry forward the work with even greater intensification.

**May I venture the suggestion** to you, however, that the Urban League be built not as an organization to win rightful rights for Negroes but as an organization whose ultimate purpose is to upgrade the living standards of everyone by winning equal opportunities for all American citizens. Sure, you should continue to represent the Negro primarily in winning his legal and moral rights, but don't overlook the fact that as you do this you make for a better community, for a better country and for greater values

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