

# Remarkable pharmacists

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## HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

*February 1978*

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Hubert H. Humphrey (1911–1978) was a pharmacist. As he added achievement upon achievement during his 30-year career in government, this fact of his early life was not often recalled by the general public. However, pharmacists of all ages and political persuasions felt a type of kinship with him and took a special interest in his work. In his last few years, as he fought so valiantly and boldly against cancer, many pharmacists were included among the millions who developed a deep affection for him. Hubert Humphrey gave us many lessons for life, and that may serve as some partial measure of this remarkable man.

In published interviews of Humphrey about his ideals and motivations, one is struck by the influence that his father, a pharmacist, had upon him. Humphrey's progressivism, his humanism, his eschewal of self-pity, his focus on the future, were apparently instilled in large part through the precepts of his father. As a young man during the Depression, his liberalism was further developed as he witnessed the economic struggle of his family and others around him. The Depression, in fact, played a role in his becoming a pharmacist. When the family drugstore failed in 1931, Humphrey returned home from college to help his father start a new pharmacy. He completed a brief course of study in pharmacy in 1933 and worked as a pharmacist until 1937. Humphrey maintained partial ownership in the family pharmacy throughout his life.

Consistent with the period of his pharmacy practice, Humphrey viewed the field as a business. He spoke often of how his experience as a pharmacist helped him appreciate the problems of the small businessman. We are reminded of the vast strides in the aspirations of pharmacy within the past few decades, and of the historical obstacles to pharmacy's full status as a health profession.

The characteristics that many will remember most about Humphrey were his wide range of interests and his seemingly boundless energy in pursuing them. His most noteworthy achievements were in the area of civil rights. He

launched his national reputation upon this issue in a stirring speech at the 1948 Democratic convention. His interest in health care was shown by the first major bill he introduced as a U.S. Senator — a proposal, in 1949, to provide medical insurance for the aged through the Social Security system. Such a program was not to be realized until 1965 when Medicare was adopted. Humphrey was the cosponsor of an amendment to the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, which has had a lasting impact on the practice of medicine and pharmacy. The 1951 Durham Humphrey Amendment established by law that certain drugs may be dispensed by pharmacists only upon a prescription order. Foreign policy, disarmament, farm programs, labor laws, job programs — the list of Humphrey's active interests stretches on and on.

The man had his share of setbacks, yet one cannot help but admire his determination not to dwell on the past but to keep his eye on the future. In 1960, there were the humiliating defeats by John Kennedy in the Wisconsin and West Virginia primaries. He served faithfully as Vice President only to see his loyalty to President Johnson work against him in the 1968 Presidential election. That narrow defeat was perhaps his saddest moment in public life. He came back to the Senate and, despite his low seniority, played an active part in many important legislative efforts.

In his final months, Humphrey shocked some people by his appearance in public. Withered and drawn by chemotherapy, he looked as if he should be in a hospital bed, not on the floor of the Senate or at some other public forum. Even in this time of personal tragedy, he continued his work and his life to the fullest. Those who were at first shocked by his condition took comfort in his indomitable spirit. This spirit made him, in the words of Vice President Walter Mondale, “an uplifting symbol of hope and joy for all people.”

Few public persons have displayed the warmth, cheerfulness, and humanness of Hubert Humphrey. His faith in the ability of mankind to improve itself through hard work and perseverance will be a continuing inspiration to us.



## DONALD E. FRANCKE

*December 1978*

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The profession was deeply saddened last month (November 1978) at the unexpected death of Donald E. Francke (1910–1978). No man has had a more profound and lasting impact on hospital pharmacy in this country. Indeed, his influence penetrated numerous facets of the profession beyond hospital prac-