

And although my father was a staunch Republican, and my mother ^{a devoted} ~~an almost ferocious~~ democrat, they found common ground, and ~~an~~ almost savage pleasure in declining to state the party to which they ^{belonged.} ~~joined.~~ True, ^{declination barred them from} ~~they couldn't~~ vote in the primaries, but that didn't matter. They preferred not to, ^{if it meant} surrendering one little morsel of private information to any agency of the government. Later, when my father turned Democrat, and my mother switched to Republican, they still declined to state, and my mother persists in ^{such unrepentant} ~~her~~ stubbornness to this day. ^{and most other Americans of their time,}

It went beyond mere stubbornness, or a trivial insistence on privacy. They believed that all governments need watching, that all officials ~~should be regarded with~~ ~~mistrust~~ have an unhealthy tendency toward power, and ~~they~~ ~~wanted like roughed lions~~ that the best way to insure personal freedom ^{is} was to curb the morbid curiosity of government concerning the private affairs of citizens. They entertained the view that the congressman, or the governor, or the president, for that matter, held power because they had given it to ^{and only} ~~him~~ temporarily; they believed that, ^{for that,} ~~they were~~ ~~paying his salary his employer his employer~~ since they paid his salary, he was their employee rather than they his. ~~This is directly the idea~~ In the realm of politics, they believed ~~that~~ it was they who should question congressmen ^{instead of} rather than the congressman questioning them---and that's the ^{frequently} way it ~~frequently~~ was. _{START}

That feeling of being your own man---~~that feeling~~ of drawing a circle around the private area of conscience, and saying "Let no man, let no government cross this line!"

and, incidentally, of getting away with it also---that
 feeling of ~~freedom~~ ^{freedom} is one that my ~~daughter~~ ^{daughter} will not have this
 year when she casts her first vote as a citizen. ^{A generation} I hope to
~~live long enough to restore it to her, or to see her and her~~
 generation restore it to themselves. ^{of oath-takers has almost sworn her out of her birthright}

I think there is a chance that these liberties
 will be restored to her---and I think that her surest allies
 in this reclamation of her birthright will be that group
 which---in the free boyhood of which I speak so nostalgically
 ---had no rights at all. I refer, of course, to that most
 progressive and most courageous section of our population---
 the Americans of Negro descent. Eighteen millions of them,
 thank God, and possibly more when the new census is completed.
 They are the hope of this land. They are the moral leaders
 of this country. They carry in their bare hands the whole
 destiny of America. It is they who will restore civil
 liberties to this land--ours as well as theirs. It is
 the cream of Southern young manhood and young womanhood
 who have taken up the torch we have been unable---or unwilling---
 to carry by ourselves. All through the south they are marching
 to jail with the pride of princes. And they will win. Not
 immediately, and not everything---but they will win, ~~and they~~
~~will win for themselves~~ and they will carry white America
 to the restoration of its ~~sixty~~ traditionally asserted, but
 never realized, dream of freedom and equality and peace.

And one of the reasons they will win is that they
 are doing it for themselves as Americans who insist on their
 full rights as Americans. There is an important difference
 here which I wish to make clear. They are winning it for
 themselves as Americans, and therefore they are winning it

A generation of oath-takers has almost sworn her out of her birthright. ^P Let no one get the idea I'm against swearing ^{the} an oath of allegiance ~~at appropriate times and occasions~~. I'm quite willing to stand up and swear with the best of them. It's the negative oath I object to. ~~It's this business of constantly being called upon to swear what you are not,~~ ^{I'm not} the only one who objects, ^{to this business of the negative oath, either.} When Senator Kennedy and Vice President Nixon both agree ^{the} the negative oath must go from the ~~education act,~~ ^{air} to education act, you can be sure the thing is on its way out.

On the other hand, one of our state governors, ^{recently} said ~~the other day~~ that he was perfectly willing to take this negative oath every day in his life.

I advise him, out of my own experience, not to try it. Some 22 years ago I fell in love with a girl, and ~~when~~, to my astonishment, she said "yes", I rushed her off to Judge Ben B. Lindsay, who ^{in a positive oath, swore} ~~then and there~~ ^{swore} ~~cath~~ed us to be true to each other for the rest of our lives.

However, I was really devoted to this young wife I'd found, and I wanted her to understand beyond any doubt that when I took ~~that~~ ^a marriage oath, I ~~really~~ really meant it. So ^{each} every night when I returned home from work, the first thing I did after ~~kissing her~~ was to ^{raise} ~~raise~~ ^{up} ~~up~~ ^{the} ~~right~~ ^{left} hand and swear ^{to her} ~~to her~~ that I was not then and never had been unfaithful, ~~to her~~. ^{accepted} At ~~first~~ she took this monotonous sort of reassurance in good grace. But after a month or two, I began to sense ^{an unacceptible} a change in our relationship. I wasn't able to put my finger on it until perhaps a week later, when, walking down the street, I ~~turned~~ suddenly, ^{turned around.} Sure enough. It was a detective.