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Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie at the Bangor Area COPE Dinner

Edmund S. Muskie

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REMARKS OF SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE
AT THE BANGOR AREA COPE DINNER
OCTOBER 3, 1970

I AM HAPPY TO BE HERE:

--TO TELL YOU THAT I VALUE THE ENDORSEMENT YOU
HAVE GIVEN US IN THIS CRUCIAL ELECTION YEAR:

--AND TO ASK FOR YOUR ACTIVE SUPPORT ALL THE WAY
THROUGH NOVEMBER 3.

BACK IN THE DAYS OF THE STAGECOACH, THERE WAS
A STORY ABOUT A COACHMAN WHO HAD A HABIT OF FLICKING HIS
WHIP AS HE DROVE ALONG THE ROAD--SPLITTING A HORSEFLY IN
TWO...OR SLAPPING A BUMBLEBEE TO THE GROUND.

ONE DAY, A PASSENGER HAPPENED TO ASK WHY HE
REFUSED TO USE HIS WHIP ON A NEST OF HORNETS THAT WAS
HANGING BY THE ROADSIDE.

"WELL, I'LL TELL YOU," THE COACHMAN REPLIED.

"THEY'RE JUST TOO DAMN ORGANIZED."

SO IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT IN THE LAST TWO DECADES
MAINE LABOR AND MAINE DEMOCRATS HAVE BOTH RECOGNIZED THE
IMPORTANCE OF BECOMING WELL-ORGANIZED.

OVER THE YEAR, WE HAVE SHARED COMMON VALUES.

WE HAVE SHARED COMMON PURPOSES.

AND WE HAVE SHARED COMMON SENSE.

WE HAVE ALWAYS AGREED THAT AMERICAN WORKERS

SHOULD HAVE

-- DECENT AND WELL-PAYING JOBS;

-- FAIR AND SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS;

-- AND ADEQUATE INSURANCE IN PERIODS OF

UNEMPLOYMENT OR DISABILITY.

AND WE HAVE IMPLEMENTED THESE FUNDAMENTAL
PRINCIPLES--NOT ONLY THROUGH THE COMMITMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC
PARTY--BUT ALSO THROUGH THE PRIDE AND SOLIDARITY OF THE
LABOR MOVEMENT--A LABOR MOVEMENT BUILT IN MAINE BY MEN OF
INDEPENDENCE...MEN OF ENERGY...MEN WHO UNDERSTOOD THAT THE
BEST PROTECTION OF UNION ACHIEVEMENTS WAS THE ELECTION OF
RESPONSIBLE DEMOCRATS.

I RECALL--WHEN I WAS GOVERNOR--HOW WE WORKED
TOGETHER

-- TO ESTABLISH THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPANDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES
IN MAINE;

-- HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER--TO INCREASE MAXIMUM

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BENEFITS BY 50 PERCENT AND MAXIMUM

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS BY 100 PERCENT;

-- HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER--TO EXTEND OCCUPATIONAL

SAFETY REGULATIONS TO THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY;

-- HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER--TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK

FOR THE FIRST MINIMUM WAGE LAW IN MAINE'S HISTORY.

WE DREAMED DREAMS TOGETHER--AND THEN WE TURNED

THOSE DREAMS INTO ^{REALITIES} REALITIES TOGETHER.

AND WHEN I LEFT THE STATE HOUSE FOR THE SENATE,

I FOUND THAT THE SAME ASSOCIATION COULD BE OF GREAT BENEFIT

TO THE ENTIRE NATION.

TIME AND AGAIN, WE PUT TOGETHER THE NECESSARY

MAJORITIES IN THE CONGRESS TO PASS MEANINGFUL LEGISLATION--

IN THE AREAS OF --

-- MEDICAL CARE;

-- AND EDUCATION;

-- AND CONSUMER PROTECTION.

WE WORKED TOGETHER TO --

-- RAISE WAGE LEVELS;

-- IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS;

-- AND GUARANTEE THE RIGHT OF COLLECTIVE

BARGAINING.

AND TOGETHER WE ENCOURAGED A POLICY OF ECONOMIC

GROWTH-- TO PROVIDE --

-- MORE JOBS;

-- MORE STABLE PRICES;

-- MORE REAL INCOME.

SO WE MUST NOT NOW FORGET THE PLAIN LESSONS OF
THE POLITICAL PAST--THAT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMON
OBJECTIVES, WE MUST CONTINUE--

- TO WORK TOGETHER;
- TO CAMPAIGN TOGETHER;
- TO WIN VICTORIES TOGETHER.

FORGET CAMPAIGN RHETORIC.

JUST LOOK AT THE RECORD--THE RECORD OF A GOVERNOR
LIKE KEN CURTIS--

- 12,000 NEW JOBS;
- 94 NEW INDUSTRIES;
- MINIMUM WAGES UP TO \$1.60;
- IMPROVEMENTS IN WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION AND
UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS AND JOB SAFETY REGULATIONS.

THAT IS PROGRESSIVE, CONCERNED AND EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP--LEADERSHIP THAT IS DOING ITS VERY BEST TO KEEP
THE PROBLEMS OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY FROM SERIOUSLY HARMING
THE PEOPLE OF MAINE.

YOU KNOW THE PROBLEM I MEAN.

PROBLEMS OF INFLATION--LAST YEAR ALONE, THE RATE
OF INFLATION NATIONWIDE JUMPED FROM 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ TO 6 PERCENT. AND
EVEN NOW, PRICES ARE STILL RISING MORE RAPIDLY THAN WHEN
THE DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION LEFT WASHINGTON ALMOST TWO
YEARS AGO.

PROBLEMS OF TIGHT MONEY-- MOST INTEREST RATES
ARE STILL AT THEIR HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE THE CIVIL WAR. FIVE
YEARS AGO, THE TYPICAL MONTHLY PAYMENT ON A \$20,000 HOUSE
WAS \$115.00--TODAY IT IS \$205.00. AND WHY? BECAUSE BUILDERS

MUST PAY MORE THEN 10 PERCENT TO FINANCE THEIR CONSTRUCTION--
AND PURCHASERS MUST PUT UP ANOTHER 9 PERCENT OR MORE IN
INTEREST CHARGES.

AND PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT--ONE AND ONE-HALF
MILLION MORE AMERICANS WERE OUT OF WORK LAST MONTH THAN
AT THE END OF 1968. AND THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED HAVE LITTLE
OR NO OPPORTUNITY TO WORK OVERTIME SO THEY CAN MAKE ENDS
MEET.

¹⁹⁶¹
IN ~~1960~~, WHEN PRESIDENT KENNEDY TOOK OFFICE,

UNEMPLOYMENT IN MAINE STOOD AT ~~5.5~~^{8.4} PERCENT. BY 1968, THAT

FIGURE HAD DROPPED TO 4.1 PERCENT. AND NOW ~~AFTER ALMOST TWO~~^{in July of this year, after}

more than 18 months

~~YEARS~~ OF DELIBERATELY RESTRICTIVE MONETARY AND FISCAL

POLICY BY THE ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON--UNEMPLOYMENT

was back up to 6.7
~~IS BACK OVER 5.5 PERCENT.~~

IT IS HIGH TIME WE PURSUE NATIONAL POLICIES OF
ECONOMIC GROWTH--POLICIES AIMED AT PRICE STABILITY AND
MAXIMUM EMPLOYMENT--POLICIES IN THE TRADITION OF THOSE
WHICH STIMULATED MAINE'S ECONOMY IN THE 1960'S TO DEVELOP
AT FOUR TIMES ITS RATE IN THE 1950'S.

YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO BLAME THE DEMOCRATS FOR
LEAVING THAT TRADITION.

BECAUSE YOU KNOW BETTER, YOU ENDORSED DEMOCRATS
LAST MONTH.

YOU APPLAUDED DEMOCRATS TONIGHT.

AND YOU MUST WORK TO ELECT DEMOCRATS IN NOVEMBER.

THANK YOU.