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2-17-1971

Press Release - Muskie Writes President About Kittery Yard

Edmund S. Muskie

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MUSKIE

Maine

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FOR RELEASE

**IMMEDIATELY
FEBRUARY 17, 1971**

MUSKIE WRITES PRESIDENT ABOUT KITTERY YARD

Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine) today released the text of a letter to the President in support of the Portsmouth - Kittery Shipyard.

Noting a 750-man cutback in employees, Senator Muskie urged that the Navy Department consider the skilled and available work force and adequate housing, as well as the limited number of similar facilities elsewhere, in making a final decision on the future of the Portsmouth-Kittery yard.

Senator Muskie said, "It appears that we are engaging in an exercise in false economy by reducing the manpower complement at the Portsmouth Naval yard."

Text of the letter follows:

"Dear Mr. President:

"I have been informed that the Navy Department has announced a reduction-in-force of approximately 750 employees at the Portsmouth-Kittery Naval Shipyard. This action is to be completed by the end of April 1971. This latest force reduction will affect the technical capability of the yard to perform submarine overhauls and is seen by many to be the beginning of the end for the yard.

"It appears that we are engaging in an exercise in false economy by reducing the manpower complement at the Portsmouth Naval yard. There are a limited number of facilities capable of performing overhaul work on submarines, particularly nuclear submarine. Private yards with the performance capability are already backlogged with private and government contracts. Pascagoula and Newport News are cases in point. Not only are these yards backed-up with work, but are faced with skilled manpower shortages.

"These yards are now, or will be, receiving Federal funds for training, housing, and community facilities to take care of their expansion programs. Meanwhile, Portsmouth has its skilled workmen in place, with no training problems, housing shortages or additional community facilities requirements.

"All of these factors should be considered in determining costs of maintaining our nuclear submarine fleet. These factors should also be considered in making the final decision on the future of Portsmouth-Kittery Naval Shipyard."
