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Church Leadership in Solving Social Problems - Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie at the Catholic Life Center

Edmund S. Muskie

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Kay Mills

Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie

Catholic Life Center

Baton Rouge, April 15, 1971

"Church Leadership in Solving Social Problems"

THANK YOU, BISHOP TRACEY FOR YOUR GRACIOUS INTRODUCTION AND FOR THE INVITATION TO SPEAK HERE TODAY.

I AM HONORED TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK AT THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER BECAUSE OF WHAT THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER STANDS FOR.

--THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER IS A RRLIVING TRIBUTE TO THE GREAT ECUMENICAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF BISHOP TRACEY AND THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY HERE.

--THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER IS A PRODUCT OF PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP WHICH WITH WHICH THE LOUISIANA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY HAS LED THE NATION IN THE QUEST FOR BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN AMERICANS OF ALL RACES AND BELIEFS.

--THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER IS SYMBOLIC OF THE ROLE WHICH THE CHURCH PLAYS IN HELPING TO OVERCOME THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS WHICH FACE OUR COUNTRY.

IT IS ESPECIALLY APPROPRIATE TO SPEAK TODAY IN THIS CENTER OF BROTHERHOOD BECAUSE WE ARE NOW IN THE EASTER SEASON--THE JOYOUS PERIOD IN THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR DURING WHICH WE CELEBRATE CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

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RESURRECTION

CHRIST'S MESSAGE CAN BE SUMMED UP IN THE GREAT COMMANDMENT: LOVE GOD AND LOVE YOUR BROTHER. TO THE CHRISTIAN, ALL PEOPLE--THE BLACK, WHITE AND YELLOW-SKINNED PEOPLES--ARE HIS BROTHER. WE ARE ALL BROTHERS UNDER THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD. THIS IS THE ESSENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE. ~~AS CHRISTIANS WE SEE~~ AS CHRISTIANS WE SEE BIGOTRY, PREJUDICE AND HATRED AS REPUDIATIONS OF OUR MOST FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS.

IT HAS BEEN CLEAR FOR ~~SOME~~ ^{SOME} TIME THAT OUR NATION~~X~~ FACES NO GREATER CHALLENGE THAN THE QUEST FOR BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN ALL AMERICANS--AND PARTICULARLY BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN WHITE AMERICANS AND BLACK AMERICANS. MB

MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, THIS IS A MORAL PROBLEM. IT IS A PROBLEM FOR WHICH WE NATURALLY TURN TO THE CHURCH FOR LEADERSHIP. AND NO WHERE HAS THE CHURCH WORKED HARDER AND MORE ~~FOR~~ ^{SUCCESSFULLY} FOR INTERRACIAL BROTHERHOOD THAN HERE IN LOUISIANA.

THE EARLY AND VOLUNTARY INTEGRATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA SHOWED THE WAY TO A NATION WHICH WAS THEN--AND STILL IS TODAY--TREADING TOO SLOWLY ON THE PATH TO RACIAL EQUALITY. THE EXAMPLE OF BROTHERHOOD IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN LOUISIANA REMAINS TODAY A MODEL FOR OTHER AMERICANS. IT IS, FOR INSTANCE, AN EXAMPLE FOR SOME OF OUR NORTHERN SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHICH ARE JUST NOW FACING THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY FOR BLACK CHILDREN.

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BISHOP TRACEY EXEMPLIFIED GREAT CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP ~~WORK~~ IN HIS WORK TO CREATE THE CATHOLIC LIFE CENTER. HE BUILT THE CENTER SO THAT PEOPLE OF ALL RACES AND CREEDS WOULD HAVE A PLACE TO MEET ~~WX~~ TOGETHER AT A TIME WHEN MIXED GATHERINGS WERE NOT POSSIBLE ELSEWHERE. IT IS A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT.

AND TODAY BISHOP TRACEY'S ~~SMS~~ SCHOOL IS TRAINING YOUNG MEN TO ENTER THE SEMINARY. THESE YOUNG MEN WILL BE THE CHRISTIAN LEADERS OF THE FUTURE IN LOUISIANA. THEY SHALL HAVE A HIGH STANDARD TO MEET. BUT THEY WILL BE WELL PREPARED TO MEET IT.