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Edmund S. Muskie Papers

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L.A. City Councilman Thomas Bradley Statement on Senator Edmund S. Muskie's Comments

Thomas Bradley

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STATEMENT ISSUED BY
L.A. CITY COUNCILMAN THOMAS BRADLEY

I issued this statement to the media so as to clarify comments which were made as a result of a meeting held by Senator Edmund Muskie with representatives of the black community in the Watts area Tuesday, September 7th.

Senator Muskie and community representatives had a frank exchange of views. The Senator also responded to questions. There were questions and answers dealing with many problems, including unemployment, economic development, busing, and one which asked, "Would you have a black man as a vice presidential running mate on your ticket?"

Senator Muskie answered something to the effect:

"If I run, it will be for the purpose of winning in order that I may do something about the problems affecting black people and others in this country. I think that in view of the climate in the country today, that if a black man were on the ticket that we would both lose."

The Senator further clarified the matter by saying, "there are many highly qualified blacks in this country who are capable of holding any office, but that's not the issue to which I have responded. I am talking about the political and practical realities at this time."

While I do not share the Senator's evaluation on this particular point, in my judgment, the Senator was honest and direct in his answer. We cannot always expect politicians to agree with everything we believe, but I would hope that we would at least be able to expect an honest answer from them. I appreciated that candor and honesty on the part of Senator Muskie and I believe that most people would. Such honesty is a fresh breath of air on the political scene and we need more of it.

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