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Edmund S. Muskie Papers

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Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie at the New Hampshire Chamber of Commerce

Edmund S. Muskie

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REMARKS BY SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1971

OK
Don't please
let me see after
you

WHEN I SPEAK TO A GROUP LIKE YOURS, I USUALLY BEGIN BY THANKING THE AUDIENCE FOR THEIR VALUABLE TIME AND THEIR INTELLIGENT ATTENTION.

ON THIS OCCASION, I AM DOUBLY GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS SOME IMPORTANT MATTERS WITH YOU. . .

NOT ONLY BECAUSE YOU BRING ME BACK TO NEW ENGLAND, WHICH IS MY HOME . . .

BUT BECAUSE IN MY EXPERIENCE, IT ISN'T EASY TO FIND A PLACE TO SPEAK IN NEW HAMPSHIRE . . . OR IN MAINE.

PEOPLE IN NEW ENGLAND DON'T SIT AROUND MUCH LISTENING TO SPEECHES...

AND PERHAPS THAT'S NOT SUCH A BAD THING.

IT'S ALL PART OF THE HERITAGE OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND TO CARE MORE ABOUT WHAT A MAN DOES THAN WHAT HE SAYS. . . TO FOCUS ON SOLVING PROBLEMS. . . INSTEAD OF TALKING ABOUT THEM.

AND IN 1971, THE LESSON OF THAT HERITAGE -- WHICH HAS TAUGHT YOU AND ME TO ACT EFFECTIVELY WHILE OTHERS JUST TALK -- THAT LESSON WILL BE TESTED AS MUCH AS IT HAS EVER BEEN.

BECAUSE IN 1971, THE PROBLEMS WHICH NEW HAMPSHIRE FACES ARE REAL AND PRESSING.

I UNDERSTAND THEM.

I HAVE SEEN MOST OF THEM IN MAINE.

OUR STATES HAVE A LOT IN COMMON, YOU KNOW. THEY ARE OLDER THAN THE AMERICAN NATION. . . AND THEY HAVE A SPECIAL WISDOM, BORN OF THEIR AGE.

NEW HAMPSHIRE IS THE ONLY STATE WITH WHICH MAINE HAS A COMMON BORDER. YOU ARE MAINE'S ONLY NEIGHBOR, AND, IN A SENSE, HER CLOSEST BROTHER IN THE AMERICAN UNION.

WE SHARE A COMMON GEOGRAPHY, A COMMON HISTORY, AND WE SHARE A COMMON PROBLEM -- HOW TO DEVELOP OUR ECONOMY -- HOW TO PROVIDE JOBS FOR OUR PEOPLE AND BUYING POWER FOR OUR DOLLARS -- WITHOUT DESTROYING THE EARTH, THE TREES, THE MOUNTAINS, AND THE AIR OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND, WHICH MAKE IT THE MOST STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL PLACE I HAVE EVER SEEN.

MOST OF YOU LIVE HERE BECAUSE YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY ABOUT THE BEAUTY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S ENVIRONMENT. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, YOU RECOGNIZE THE CRITICAL NEED FOR YOUR STATE'S ECONOMY TO GROW AND FLOURISH, SO YOU AND YOUR FELLOW CITIZENS CAN MAINTAIN A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING.

I THINK THAT BOTH GOALS CAN BE MET, ALTHOUGH I WON'T TRY TO PRETEND THAT THE JOB WILL BE AN EASY ONE.

ONE THING ABOUT NEW ENGLANDERS IS THAT WE DON'T TRY TO COVER UP OUR PROBLEMS. WHEN NEWS IS BAD, WE DON'T TRY TO MAKE IT SOUND GOOD -- WE FACE IT DIRECTLY.

AND THE ECONOMIC NEWS FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE . . . AT THE MOMENT . . . ISN'T GOOD:

IN 1969, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THIS STATE WAS 1.9%. IN JULY OF 1971, THE RATE WAS UP TO 5.5%, THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN NEW HAMPSHIRE IN 20 YEARS. AND DOVER'S RATE WAS OVER 6% IN EARLY AUGUST.

AT THE SAME TIME, WORKERS AT THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD CANNOT FIND MUCH COMFORT IN ANY OF WASHINGTON'S CURRENT POLICIES AND PLANS. THERE ARE STILL 1,200 MEN LAID OFF FROM THE YARD, AND IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THEY'LL BE ENOUGH WORK COMING IN TO REVERSE THE TREND. . . . ESPECIALLY IF CONSTRUCTION YARDS START DOING THEIR OWN OVERHAULING AND CONVERSION, WHICH IS NOW PORTSMOUTH'S ONLY FUNCTION.

IT WAS 1964 WHEN WASHINGTON ANNOUNCED THAT THE SHIPYARD WOULD BE PHASED OUT. SINCE THEN, WE HAVE FOUGHT TOGETHER TO KEEP THE YARD ALIVE -- AND TO PROTECT THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES IN MAINE AND NEW HAMPSHIRE.

I JOINED THE PROTEST IN '64, WHEN THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE, AND AT THAT TIME I CALLED FOR A CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF THE DECISION.

THE NEXT YEAR, I CO-SPONSORED LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN AREAS HURT BY BASE CLOSINGS. AND LAST YEAR WE WON A \$4 MILLION APPROPRIATION FOR MODERNIZATION AND REPAIRS AT THE PORTSMOUTH YARD.

RECENTLY, I HAVE [REDACTED] WRITTEN TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, PROTESTING HIS ORDER TO REDUCE WORK FORCES -- AND TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, PROTESTING THE REDUCTION IN BUSINESS AT THE FOUNDRY AND PATTERN SHOPS.

THE RESPONSE IN WASHINGTON HAS BEEN LESS THAN FAVORABLE. WE CAN PROTEST, AND MARSHAL SUPPORT, BUT I'M AFRAID THE FATE OF THE PORTSMOUTH SHIPYARD IS NOW VERY MUCH IN THE HANDS OF THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION.

IN SHORT, THE EMPLOYMENT PICTURE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE IS NOT ENCOURAGING. INDUSTRIES FUNDAMENTAL TO THE ECONOMY ARE STRUGGLING, AND IN THE PROCESS ARE BEING FORCED TO LAY OFF WORKERS, WHICH FURTHER STAGNATES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HERE. AND THE HARDSHIPS IN PRIVATE ECONOMIC FORTUNES HAVE OF COURSE TAKEN THEIR TOLL ON THE PUBLIC ECONOMY OF THIS STATE, WHICH BEARS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING A WHOLE RANGE OF VITAL SERVICES.

IT'S A FAMILIAR PROBLEM -- ECONOMIC DECLINE STIFLING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A STATE'S REVENUE GATHERING MECHANISM. I SAW IT WHEN I WAS GOVERNOR OF MAINE, AND I SEE IT NOW IN YOUR REVENUE FIGURES.

YOU'LL RECALL THAT GOVERNOR PETERSON THOUGHT IT NECESSARY LAST YEAR TO SPEND \$261 MILLION JUST TO KEEP NEW HAMPSHIRE AT A DECENT LEVEL OF SOCIAL SERVICES. YET THE LEGISLATURE COULD PASS A BUDGET OF ONLY \$161 MILLION, CUTTING AID TO EDUCATION BY 43%, AND ELIMINATING STATE REVENUE SHARING WITH CITIES AND TOWNS. YOU ALL PAY PROPERTY TAXES -- AND YOU ALL KNOW THE PRESSURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS UNDER. I THINK IT WAS FRANKLIN WHICH JUST CUT \$20,000 FROM ITS BUDGET FOR SCHOOLS.

NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY CLAIM THAT YOUR TOWNS AREN'T TAXING ENOUGH. THE REAL NEED IS FOR MORE STATE AND FEDERAL AID. AND IN THIS TIME OF NEED, IT IS SIMPLY INCREDIBLE TO SEE THE PRESIDENT'S REVENUE SHARING PROPOSAL POSTPONED TO PAY FOR A \$14 BILLION TAX BREAK FOR BIG BUSINESS.

NO WONDER THE ECONOMIC PICTURE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE -- AND IN MAINE -- ISN'T AS BRIGHT AS ANY OF US WOULD LIKE. ON THE ONE HAND, WORKERS ARE BEING THROWN OUT OF WORK, TAKING MUCH OF OUR REGION'S PROSPERITY WITH THEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, MANY LOCALITIES CAN NO LONGER RAISE ENOUGH MONEY TO FINANCE PROPER SCHOOLING FOR OUR CHILDREN . . . TO LIGHT AND CLEAN OUR STREETS . . . TO FIGHT CRIME AND DRUG ABUSE . . . TO PROVIDE THE COUNTLESS OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES THAT WE DEPEND ON SO MUCH.

OF COURSE, THERE ARE NO SIMPLE ANSWERS TO THIS ECONOMIC DILEMMA. WE ALL KNOW THAT THE MOST DIRECT AND PERMANENT SOLUTION IS TO GET NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND'S ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN -- TO PROVIDE THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HERE WHICH MEANS JOBS AND GROWTH, AND WHICH WILL, AT THE SAME TIME, PROTECT THE STATE'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

ATTRACTING INDUSTRY FOR GROWTH IS A LONG AND DIFFICULT TASK, BUT IT WILL BE MADE DOUBLY DIFFICULT IF FEDERAL POLICY DOESN'T RECOGNIZE AND ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AT PRESENT, NATIONAL POLICY MOVES IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION -- TOWARD STRENGTHENING BUSINESSES ALREADY IN EXISTENCE -- TOWARD SUPPLEMENTING EXISTING PLANT CAPACITY AT THE EXPENSE OF CONSUMER CAPACITY -- IN SHORT, TOWARD A PROCESS OF INDUSTRIAL GROWTH WHICH ONLY INDIRECTLY ENCOURAGES NEW INDUSTRY IN AREAS LIKE NEW HAMPSHIRE AND MAINE.

I THINK THAT NATIONAL POLICIES MUST CHANGE. WE HAVE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT FEDERAL REVENUE SHARING. IT WOULD TAKE THE PRESSURE OFF LOCAL TAXES -- AND IT WOULD ALSO PROVIDE A FRESH INFUSION OF FUNDS TO STIMULATE GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT.

BUT WE MUST DO MORE.

I HAVE SUGGESTED, AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT FOR CORPORATIONS, A NEW \$7 BILLION CONSUMER TAX CREDIT.

EVERY INDIVIDUAL WOULD RECEIVE UP TO A \$100 CREDIT ON HIS INCOME TAX RETURN TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF MAJOR CONSUMER DURABLES . . . ITEMS RANGING FROM A NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE'S FURNITURE TO A LONG-AWAITED T.V. SET FOR A RETIRED CLERK.

THE BENEFIT WOULD BE DIRECT RELIEF TO THE TAXPAYER HIMSELF -- BUT MORE THAN THAT -- THE STIMULATION OF A VITAL ECONOMIC SECTOR -- A NEW INCENTIVE FOR THE KIND OF PRODUCTION AND PURCHASING WHICH IS ULTIMATELY THE KEY TO NEW HAMPSHIRE'S GROWTH.

FINALLY, I'VE ARGUED FOR SOME TIME THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST GET INTO THE EMPLOYMENT BUSINESS, DEVELOPING THE MAINTAINING A PROGRAM OF PUBLIC SERVICE JOBS. NO ONE SHOULD BE FORCED TO LIVE ON UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION OR RELIEF. AND A JOB IS FAR BETTER THAN WELFARE . . . BETTER FOR THE INDIVIDUAL, BETTER FOR THE COUNTRY, AND BETTER FOR OUR ALREADY OVERTAXED CITIES AND STATES.

WITH THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF FEDERAL POLICIES, WE CAN GET OUR COMMON LOCAL ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN. BUT IT'S IMPORTANT TO MAKE SURE THAT YOUR STATE AND MINE MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO OURSELVES AND TO THIS COUNTRY TO GROW AMIDST OUR NATURAL BEAUTIES, NOT TO GROW OVER THEM.

AND IT CAN BE DONE. IT'S BEEN PROVED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THAT A GOOD ENVIRONMENT IS GOOD ECONOMICS -- THAT AIR AND WATER POLLUTION COST FAR MORE IN THE LONG RUN THAN THEY BRING IN SHORT RUN PROFITS -- THAT A STATE'S NATURAL WONDERS HAVE NO PRICE.

NEW HAMPSHIRE AND MAINE STAND IN UNIQUE POSITIONS IN THE HISTORY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN IN THIS COUNTRY.

MOST OF OUR INDUSTRIAL GROWTH IS AHEAD OF US -- AND BEFORE IT HAPPENS, WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO MAKE IT WORK THE WAY WE WANT IT TO.

WE CAN BECOME A LABORATORY FOR THE ENTIRE NATION.

WE CAN SHOW AMERICA HOW PROPER PLANNING AND THE RIGHT KIND OF PROBLEM SOLVING CAN LEAD TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND NATURAL BEAUTY SIDE BY SIDE.

THIS WILL NOT ALWAYS BE AN EASY TASK. IT WILL REQUIRE SOME HARD ANALYSIS AND SOME DIFFICULT CHOICES.

WE MUST THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THE INDUSTRY WE ATTRACT TO NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND. WE MUST LEARN TO COMPARE THE GOOD AN INDUSTRY PROMISES FOR OUR ECONOMY WITH THE CHANCE THAT IT WILL DO HARM TO OUR ECOLOGY.

AND WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT OUR GREATEST ASSET IN ACQUIRING NEW INDUSTRIES IS THE ENVIRONMENT WITH WHICH WE CAN SURROUND THEM

CLEAN, CLEAR LAKES, IN WHICH FAMILIES CAN BOAT AND SWIM;

THE FRESH MOUNTAIN AIR, WHICH BOASTS OF HEALTH AND VIGOR;

THE KIND OF REGION WHICH CAN PROVIDE BOTH THE SECURITY OF PROSPERITY AND THE SATISFACTION OF ☐ TRULY LIVABLE TOWNS AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

THE INDUSTRIES WHICH WILL GROW AND PROSPER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE AND IN MAINE MUST RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF THE NATURAL BOUNTY AROUND THEM. WE MUST WORK WITH THEM AND LEND THEM OUR EXPERTISE AND OUR TECHNICAL ABILITIES, IN ORDER TO SECURE THE DUAL GOAL OF A STRONG ENVIRONMENT AND A STRONG ECONOMY.

AND THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO INDUSTRY CAPABLE OF HELPING YOUR STATE AND MY STATE, WHICH IS INCAPABLE OF DOING SO IN A MANNER THAT RESPECTS THE DIGNITY AND BEAUTY OF THIS GREAT REGION.

WE HAVE MUCH TO DO.

WE MUST GET NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND MOVING TOWARD PROSPERITY.

WE MUST PRESERVE ITS NATURAL BEAUTY.

WE MUST GRASP AGAIN THE TOOLS OF OUR HERITAGE -- AND GET ON WITH THE WORK THAT MUST BE DONE.

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