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Speeches

Edmund S. Muskie Papers

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Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie at the Young Leadership Conference

Edmund S. Muskie

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YOU HAVE TALKED WITH QUITE AN ARRAY OF DEMOCRATS TODAY.

HUBERT HUMPHREY WAS HERE THIS MORNING. ACTUALLY, HE'S NOT SPEAKING AND TRAVELLING BECAUSE HE INTENDS TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT. HIS REAL AIM IS TO PROMOTE HIS NEW BOOK. THE TITLE IS: "LET THE WORD GO FORTH...GO FORTH. GO FORTH..."

I SUPPORTED HUBERT AND RAN WITH HIM IN 1968. AND FRANKLY, I THINK ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER.

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WE ALL KNOW HOW DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED HUBERT IS ABOUT LOSING TO RICHARD NIXON. BUT THINK HOW I FEEL. . . I LOST TO SPIRO AGNEW.

THIS MORNING YOU ALSO HEARD FROM MY GOOD FRIEND JOHN LINDSAY. NO WONDER HE SWITCHED PARTIES. LOOK AT WHAT FIVE YEARS OF REPUBLICAN MISRULE DID TO NEW YORK CITY.

AND I HOPE SENATOR JACKSON TOLD YOU ABOUT HIS PROPOSAL TO FORM A BASEBALL TEAM COMPOSED OF THE POTENTIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT.

SCOOP USED TO BE VERY HIGH ON THE IDEA BECAUSE HE THOUGHT HE HAD HIS POSITION ALL SEWED UP. BUT IN THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS, HE'S DISCOVERED THAT HE MAY HAVE TO BEAT OUT SAM YORTY FOR RIGHT FIELD.

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YOUR MEETING TODAY IS ASKING A QUESTION OF SOME INTEREST TO ME: "HOW CAN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY WIN IN 1972?"

OF COURSE, OUR ULTIMATE TASK IS TO NOMINATE THE RIGHT PERSON FOR PRESIDENT. I HAVE SOME VERY DEFINITE IDEAS ABOUT WHO THAT SHOULD BE. I THINK OUR CANDIDATE THIS YEAR SHOULD COME FROM A SMALL STATE. . . POSSIBLY IN NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND. HE SHOULD HAVE A RECORD OF PUBLIC SERVICE. . . .

POSSIBLY IN THE SENATE. HE SHOULD BE TALL -- THAT'S VERY IMPORTANT. . . AND HAVE WAVY HAIR. I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR SUCH A CANDIDATE IN MY TRAVELS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. WHEN I FIND HIM, YOU'LL BE THE FIRST TO KNOW.

BUT BEYOND THE CHOICE OF A NOMINEE. . . EVEN BEYOND THE OBVIOUSLY VULNERABLE RECORD OF THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION -- THERE IS A FAR MORE FUNDAMENTAL BASIS FOR THE ELECTION OF A DEMOCRAT NEXT NOVEMBER -- OUR COUNTRY'S NEED FOR A NEW KIND OF LEADERSHIP IN THE 1970'S.

IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS, I HAVE SEEN MOST OF THIS COUNTRY. AND I HAVE SENSED A CHANGE IN THE NATION'S MOOD -- AWAY FROM THE DOUBT AND THE DESPAIR OF RECENT YEARS.

IN 1971, OUR PEOPLE ARE READY TO BELIEVE AGAIN IN THE POSSIBILITIES OF AMERICA -- AND IN THEIR OWN ABILITY TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY AS GREAT AND AS GOOD AS IT CAN BE.

AMERICANS ARE DEMANDING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY -- NOT THE UPS AND DOWNS OF GOVERNMENT BY IMPULSE -- BUT STRONG AND STEADY GROWTH. AND THEY'LL NEVER GET THAT UNDER RICHARD NIXON.

THEY ARE DEMANDING NOT ONLY AN END TO WHAT IS WRONG, BUT SO MUCH MORE THAT IS RIGHT. . . MEDICAL CARE OPEN TO EVERYONE, HIGHER EDUCATION CLOSED TO NO ONE, AND THE USE OF OUR WEALTH AND STRENGTH TO HELP THE MANY WHO ARE IN NEED INSTEAD OF THE FEW WHO ARE ALREADY WELL-OFF.

AND THEY'LL NEVER GET THAT UNDER RICHARD NIXON.

THEY ARE DEMANDING A FOREIGN POLICY WHICH PUTS THE LIVES OF PEOPLE AHEAD OF COLD WAR MYTHS -- A DOMESTIC POLICY WHICH STANDS AGAINST THE CONCENTRATION OF PRIVATE POWER -- AND A LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY WHICH REALLY CAN MAKE OUR STREETS SAFE AND OUR HOMES SECURE. AND THEY CAN'T GET THOSE POLICIES UNDER RICHARD NIXON.

SO THE REAL DIFFERENCE NEXT YEAR -- THE KEY TO OUR VICTORY -- IS THE CHANGE IN OUR PEOPLE. AMERICANS WANT LEADERSHIP TO MOVE THIS COUNTRY FORWARD AGAIN. AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY HAS ALWAYS PROVIDED THAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP.

I THINK WE CAN DO IT AGAIN.

I THINK WE CAN CONVERT THE STIRRINGS OF HOPE INTO A NEW START TOWARD
A BETTER COUNTRY.

WE HAVE THE ISSUES TO WIN IN 1972. WE HAVE THE CANDIDATES TO WIN.
BUT MORE THAN THAT, WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO LEAD AGAIN.

ARE YOU READY TO TRY?

THAT IS MY QUESTION. AND NOW I WOULD BE PLEASED TO ANSWER YOURS.

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