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TRANSCRIPT

REMARKS OF SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE
RALLY - BERLIN, N. H.
JANUARY 13, 1972

Thank you very much.

This is about as warm and generous and neighborly a welcome as a man could expect, and for that I'm grateful. But I got to, . . . You know, this also is an audience of New Englanders who aren't accustomed to saying too much most of the time. And as I came up through, someone gave me this as a warning and I would like to read it to you. It's a gentle warning, but it's a warning. "A speech is a solemn responsibility. The man who makes a bad 30 minute speech to 200 people wastes only a half hour of his own time, but he wastes 100 hours of the audience's time. -- worse than 4 days, which should be a hanging offence."

Now I can think of a story that makes that same point even better. This is a story of a down East Yankee farmer whose hearing was going bad. So he went to see his doctor, and the doctor said, "Well, how much do you drink?" He said, "Well, I drink about a quart a night." So the doctor said, "Well, if you don't stop drinking you are going to lose your hearing all together. "Well," the fellow said, "you know doc, I like what I've been drinking so much better than what I've been hearing that I think I'll just keep on going."

And I suppose that's true in New Hampshire every four years. And yet of course, we've met here tonight to discuss at least one or two things of common interest.

First of all, it's no longer a secret as to what I'm trying to do this year, to try to make sure that we have a new president. (APPLAUSE) And I intend to try to be that man. (APPLAUSE) But whether or not I am, isn't really the important point. The important point is that we need a new president. I hope you won't mind if I use at least a few minutes of those few minutes to which I ought to limit myself reminiscing.

I was born in this valley, this valley of the Androscoggin, as I think most of you know. I was born in a mill town, south of Berlin, and I know what that is. Berlin and Rumford are very much alike. One horse towns in the sense that both towns, for most of my lifetime, have been dependent on a single industry. This industry has been the economic base which has provided the jobs, the income, the towns, the schools, the opportunities, the future and the character of the life we live. And I lived in that town for 18 years until I went to school. But I've never forgotten that town and I have never forgotten this part of the country and the problems that are associated with these circumstances here in the Androscoggin Valley.

It's a strange mixture, as most places are in America, of opportunity, of doubt, of limitations, of frustrations and discontent, as well as hopes and promise. So all my life I think of the people of the Androscoggin Valley as people who have been concerned about job security or insecurity, as people who have been concerned about the beauty of this area, the purity of its streams, the cleanness and crispness of its air, the openness of its spaces. The area people have been concerned about these things for most of my lifetime. For you who are young in this room, that level of concern was not nearly as high when I was young as it is now, because the impact

MORE

of these problems is more visible today than it was when I was young.

My driving urge as a youngster of high school age when I was here, is revealed best, I suppose, in what I had to say as an eighteen year old. Last March, my mother rummaged into the attic of her house in Rumford, where she still lives, and where I lived as a boy. She found the text of a speech I made to my high school class on graduating night. You would be interested to know what the subject of that speech was. In June of 1932, it was peace. Why? Because just two or three years earlier, the leading nations of the world had signed a piece of paper which they hoped and which they must have believed could bring peace to mankind in the 1930's. That piece of paper was the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, designed to outlaw war. Because that objective so appealed to the imagination, to hopes and dreams of the young people of 1932, I made my speech to my graduating class on that subject expressing the hope that that indeed would be its impact. Well of course you don't need me to tell you that that isn't the way it has been. Since that time we have had more wars, more people killed in wars than in all the previous history of mankind.

We were also concerned in those days, as young people, with preserving the beauty of our surroundings. And it was truly beautiful in a way that is not as evident today, even though we still think that this part of the country has so much more to offer than almost any other. But we hoped also that our waters would always be as clean as they then were, and they weren't all clean then. We hoped that the Maine woods and lakes, this included New Hampshire, would always offer recreational opportunities of the kind that we knew. And that has changed, since I was a boy.

And so the dreams, the hopes, are not that much different. In many ways, the problem of achieving them is a greater problem than it was then. And yet in other ways we have made significant progress. So the challenge is whether or not we can make it possible for people to enjoy fruitful lives, to have lives of opportunity, to build something better for their children and at the same time to live in a beautiful, healthy, worthwhile environment. That's a more difficult challenge today than it was thirty years ago, but it still is challenge that we can meet.

Now I'll tell you one difference between the time when I was in high school and today. When I graduated from high school in 1932, we were in the depths of a depression. This doesn't mean I am going to talk too long. We were in the midst of a depression and the country was in a period of great doubt about its ability to respond to the needs of our people. And yet I do not recall that even at that time there was the doubt about our ability to meet the future that I find in Americans of all descriptions across this country today. We have economic problems today, but they are not as serious as they were then. We do not have the problems connected with the war, or we did not then that we have today. And we still had the problems in both instances of convincing people and of persuading people that we could build something better. And we believed that.

And we believed it especially in 1932, after President Roosevelt was elected and took office, and made us believe once again, that whatever we were determined to achieve, we could achieve. Now that is what I think our country has to do again.

We live in a time of doubt -- doubt as to our purpose, doubt as to our abilities, doubt as to whether or not some of these problems can be solved. We live in a time of suspicion. Different groups of Americans are suspicious about other groups of Americans -- about their goodwill, about their intention, about their purpose.

We live in a time of doubt about government; whether our government is truly responsive to our people. And I say to you that there isn't a problem that we face today that we can't solve if we want to, if we make up our minds to do so, and if we are willing to agree among ourselves as to what is important, what is less important and what is unimportant. I believe that because I read it in the faces of Americans of all descriptions from one end of this country to the other.

The people of this area may seem different from the people of other areas. They may seem different from the people of other backgrounds and of other colors, and other traditions and of different experience. But all Americans are alike in their basic hopes and aspirations.

Most Americans really want peace for our country and they want a country dedicated to peace, and they want a country committed to the objectives of moving not only this country, but mankind as a whole in the direction of peace. It has been one of our ideals as a country that I remember as a boy, and that my emigrant father used to remind me of, that this country represents the desirability of peace as a condition of man.

We have come to doubt that in recent years. Our young people especially have come to doubt that in recent years. Worse than that, other people overseas have come to doubt that in recent years. And so we have to reestablish the credibility of our peaceful ideals here in America.

Secondly, all Americans like to believe that this is a land of opportunity, for them. And all Americans believe that fundamentally, that if they are to have opportunities, opportunity must be within the reach of all Americans whoever they are. There is no way of piecing it out so that a few have opportunity and others do not. Because we cannot hope to have domestic peace here in America unless all Americans believe that there is something better in their future, and I don't find that this is anything different than I came to learn as a boy 50 miles downstream in Rumford. This is a lesson we were taught by our parents, by our teachers. This is a lesson we came to believe was the ultimate objective of our country.

Thirdly, we have got to believe, as we used to, that the way to achieve both of these first objectives, peace as an ideal and a national policy, opportunity as a way of life for our people, is education. There is a very mixed picture about education in this country today. When I was first elected governor, I could persuade any taxes, any increase in taxes, in the name of education; because all Americans instinctively understand that if a people are to break out of the cycle of poverty, if they are to enlarge their own opportunities for happiness, education is important. Whether

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it is in public schools, private schools or religious oriented schools, or whatever, education is fundamental. Why then this recent resistance to educational bond issues, and to taxes in the name of education? Resistance comes from the fact that Americans doubt that they are getting the kind of education for which they are being asked to pay, which goes back to my original point. That the education is the key to the future of our people as individuals and our country as a nation, I think is something that Americans fundamentally believe.

Well, I could go down through the whole list, and I could document, and I think demonstrate, that Americans whoever they are, believe in these values and these ideas. Peace, opportunity, education, a clean environment, go down through the list, and I can take you to any group of Americans across this land, and I won't find any disagreement as to these as objectives.

Why then are we bogged down? Why are we so divided? Why are we so suspicious? For a couple of reasons.

I think the great catalyst, which has really triggered all this negative attitude among Americans has been the war -- There are other reasons, but the war.

The second reason has been the fact that as Americans get to know more about how other Americans live, the injustices of our society are clearer to us all. Racial injustice, the injustice which makes old age a burden, the injustice which makes some people bear a heavier share of the burden of supporting government than others who are better able to pay -- All of the injustices are clearer, more visible, in a television - radio age than they ever were before. That's the second reason.

And then thirdly, of course, is the fact that doubt feeds on doubt. Once we began to doubt our country over the war, once we began to doubt our government over the question of justice, we began to doubt everything else.

I see this election campaign in 1972 as a way to get all of this out of our system. As a time when we can lay all these problems on the table, as a time when we can discuss them truthfully, honestly, frankly and directly. As a time when we can begin to agree on what is important, what is less important and what is unimportant. As a time when we can begin to make commitments to the important values of them all. And they are no different than they were when I was a boy in Rumford, living within a half mile of the Androscoggin River. (APPLAUSE)

Now I'll tell you why I'm against President Nixon. (APPLAUSE) Why I think we need a new President. Why I think we need new policy, and I'll do it on his own terms.

Three years ago, after he had taken office, in a speech that I remember well on television, he said that he would be judged, would expect to be judged, on three promises he had made in the '68 campaign. The first promise was to end the war. Since he made that promise, three years have passed. 40% of all the Americans who have died in Vietnam have died since he made that promise. We have spent \$50 billion more on that war since he made that promise, and he is still trying to explain to us why he can't end it. (APPLAUSE) And I say to you that isn't good enough.

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The second promise he made was that he'd create 15 million more jobs and that he would solve the problem of inflation without creating unemployment. Now what has he done there? You know here in the Berlin area. But let me give you the national figures as well as the state figures. Inflation has grown over this period, from a little over 4% to a little over 6% at its peak. Unemployment grew from a little under 3 1/3% to over 6% at its peak, and its peak was reached last month to 6.1% nationally, 7.3% here in the Berlin area. Instead of 15 million more jobs, he has created 4 million more jobs which hasn't been enough to take care of the young people coming on the job market as well as taking care of those misplaced by economic slow-down and technological change in this country, so that today over 5 million Americans are without jobs, don't know where they are coming from, and another 75 to 80 million who are employed are fearful they may lose their jobs. And if we take into account those who are working less, those who have lost overtime, those families who have lost a second job, more than 20% of working Americans have felt these effects of economic slow-down as you have here in Berlin.

What are some of the other effects of this economic policy? We've had the highest interest rate since the Civil War. Last year was the first year in ten years that economic growth stopped in this country. Last year was the first year in ten years that the number of people in poverty increased. Last year, no this year, no last year - every year it gets worse. (APPLAUSE) Last year was the first year since 1893 that we had a trade deficit. In other words, last year for the first time -- how much is that? 8 into 71 -- 78 years ... 79, my mathematics is almost as bad as the President's -- that we didn't earn enough as a nation, this great nation with a trillion dollar economy, didn't earn enough as a nation overseas to pay the salary of a single ambassador, or a single soldier, or a single Peace Corps volunteer. This great nation of ours, for the first time.

You know, I don't know how much balance of payments means to you. The balance of payments represents our international bank account, whether we are earning more or less -- Earning more than we're taking in or earning less than we are taking in. Back in 1964 we had a balance of payments deficit of 3 1/2 billion dollars for the year. The Republicans including Mr. Nixon were preaching gloom and doom in the mismanagement of the Democratic administration, but we dealt with that problem, and in 1968, the last year of the Johnson Administration, we had a surplus -- Over 1 1/2 billion dollars. What happened this year? The Third quarter this year ... of 1971 alone, we had an international balance of payments deficit of 13 billion dollars, and for the year as a whole over 30 billion dollars, or almost 10 times as much of a deficit the year of this responsible Republican Administration than in the worst year of the 60's when two Democratic presidents had the problem of working us out of the Republican recession of 1960.

This President has been an economic disaster for the country. He talks about his "new prosperity." Do you know what that is by his own terms, his own target? Is he promising us something as good as we had when he took office, something better? NO. His target, his new prosperity target is an unemployment level 40% higher than when he took office. I'll take the old prosperity for my money rather than this new one. (APPLAUSE)

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But then how about the other target? The other target is a price level 17% higher than when he took office. Now what does that mean to you? It means that if you earn \$100 a week, today, you are paying \$14 of that \$100 as your share of the cost of Mr. Nixon's inflation. \$14 a week is what the "new prosperity" means to you. Out of your grocery budget, out of your rent budget, out of your education budget, out of your tax budget, \$14 bucks a week out of a hundred is what you are paying for this Administration's mismanagement of our economy. The President will be telling you this next year about the tax cut that he got for you last year. It doesn't begin to offset the inflation cut that he's produced in your budget.

The sins of this Administration are so many, the list is so long that I couldn't possibly cover all of them in the 30 minutes that my friend in the audience gave me. But I'll tell you what his greatest sin of all was. In the last campaign, he had a good piece of advice, he was given a good piece of advice and he recognized it when he saw it. It wasn't from one of his campaign advisors, it wasn't from those who put together that program "The Selling of the President", it was from a little girl who held up a sign saying, "Bring us together." He adopted that as his theme, used it in his inaugural address, and yet the thrust of all of his policies ever since has been to divide Americans against each other. We have got more division in this country, more doubt about the purposes of our country and our government, more doubt about each other than we had before he took office; because he simply cannot avoid setting group against group, setting people against people in the hope of building the narrow political base necessary to reelect him to public office. He has divided this country when he pledged to bring it together, and the failure to keep that promise is the biggest failure of all; because if he'd kept that one, if he had kept that one, we could have taken the rest of it. Having failed to keep that one, then he has raised doubts among us as to our ability to deal with the rest of it.

I want to say to you, on a personal note just to close -- you know I set a theme for my campaign a week ago when I pledged a "New Beginning". I didn't really think that that meant getting married over again. (BANTER WITH AUDIENCE) One of my advisors suggested a line to use. It would go like this -- Mr. Nixon would do anything to keep his job, what has he done to help you keep yours?

Now I just want to ... I just want to inject this personal note at this point. I'm going to be travelling New Hampshire a great deal in the next 8 weeks and trying to cover other states as well. It's very presumptuous for a man -- and I am sure for a woman -- to believe himself or herself capable of filling this awesome responsibility of the presidency. It isn't easy to bring yourself to a belief that you can do so. I certainly never set it up as the target of my life, even of my political life. I certainly never believed it would be within my reach as recently as three years ago. And now it is. And I've tried to test myself against what I understand to be the expectations of our people, with respect to the presidency. No man can make that judgment for himself, finally. The people he seeks to lead must make that judgment. And so hope you will test me because I don't want to go into the presidency on the basis of my own ambition or my own judgment as to my qualifications. I would want

MORE

to feel that you believe in me and my possibility for filling this job. That's why I get so much out of meetings like this and the meetings I have with people up and down the street, in the factories and mills, and in the stores of America. I want to believe that you believe in my potential for this office. And as I see the responsibilities of the presidency beginning a year from now -- indeed now if we could do anything about it -- the next president must be a man who can help us believe in ourselves and our country once more (APPLAUSE) And if he can do that we have what we want.

Now let me say just one other thing -- yes, Sir?

I'm asked how ... what do I think about the price freeze.

Well, first of all, and I don't want to get into a long economic speech, but I have got to say something as a beginning to that answer. First of all, the President created problems for himself when he said in January of 1969, that he would never use wage-price controls or wage-price guidelines of any kind to try to control inflation. And he said in addition, that he would expect labor and management to make their own decisions with respect to prices and wages in accordance with the interests of their organizations. That was the guideline he laid down three years ago.

So labor did what he suggested. Labor used the collective bargaining process to offset the impact of inflation upon wages. And overall in the next year and a half to two years, negotiated increases which were about at the annual rate of inflation one and a half years afterward. Then the President changed the rules and said you were wrong to labor to do this. We are not going to let you enjoy the benefits of the contracts that you negotiated ... yes, Sir?

Q: What about the tax on cigarettes?

ESM: Well, I don't know. That is a state tax. There is no proposal to increase any federal tax on it.

Let me say thank you for coming here tonight. And I ask for your help in the next weeks ahead, and if you give it to me, we'll go on to victory across the country.