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## **Press Release - Muskie Responds to Political Advertisement**

Edmund S. Muskie

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# MUSKIE

Maine

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FOR RELEASE

IMMEDIATELY  
OCTOBER 29, 1970

## MUSKIE RESPONDS TO POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

Portland, Maine -- Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine) today said that the political advertisement placed in several Maine newspapers by the "Committee for a Responsible Congress" was a "vicious, irresponsible, deliberate untruth."

Speaking to the Portland Chamber of Commerce breakfast, Senator Muskie said that he was confident that the people of his home State would reject "the importation into Maine of a brand of politics which violates basic standards of decency and civility."

Senator Muskie noted that the three signers of the advertisement read a statement issued last night by Mrs. Jouett Shouse, one of the signers, specifically repudiating the advertisement. Senator Muskie said that he found it "distasteful to try to untangle the motives, the purposes and the associations of those who would engage in such a perversion of our political processes."

Senator Muskie said the people of Maine "have a twenty-five year record, in which they have been closely involved, upon which to judge" the truth of the advertisement.

Senator Muskie concluded by saying that "we live in a troubled, divisive time -- a time when there is diminishing confidence in our political institutions and their capacity to stimulate the best instincts in people."

"Those who bear the responsibility of political leadership must be sensitive to these doubts and so conduct themselves as to re-establish the essential public confidence."

"The Committee for a Responsible Congress has abdicated that responsibility and earned the condemnation of all decent citizens."

Senator Muskie's text is as follows:

### STATEMENT BY SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE BEFORE THE GREATER PORTLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OCTOBER 29, 1970

I had intended to speak this morning on the subject of our national oil import policy and its impact upon Maine and New England. That subject -- as I have learned in my travels over the State in recent weeks -- is of great concern to Maine. For that reason, I am releasing the speech I had prepared on that subject for distribution to you this morning.

I have chosen to speak this morning on the subject of another kind of import -- the importation into Maine of a brand of politics which violates basic standards of decency and civility -- a brand of politics which I am confident will be rejected by the people of Maine.

Let me be specific.

In some Maine papers, yesterday, a political advertisement, taking up 3/4 of a page, appeared. It read, in part, as follows:

"What kind of Man is Edmund Muskie?"

That question, in banner headlines, is followed by this answer:

"You can't be sure by what he says today in Maine at election time. But you can find out something about him by taking a look at what he and his friends whose support he accepts have been saying all along. If you agree with their views on excusing lawlessness, on undermining our national defense, on forgiving rioters and looters, and on accepting the use of marijuana and heroin by our young people, then Muskie is your kind of man."

That answer is a vicious, irresponsible, deliberate untruth.

Who is responsible for it? It is signed, "Committee for a Responsible Congress, 1108 National Press Building, Washington, D. C. 20004."

Three names appear, as members of the Committee, as follows:

1. "Carl L. Shipley - Treasurer." Mr. Shipley is a former Chairman of the District of Columbia Republican Committee. He is presently Republican National Committeeman for the District of Columbia.

2. "Mark Austad." Mr. Austad is much better known in Washington as Mark Evans, a television personality. I do not know why he did not use his more familiar television name. It was under that more familiar name that he served as Co-chairman of the Nixon Inaugural Committee.

3. "Mrs. Jouett Shouse." Mrs. Shouse is a summer resident of Maine whom I have been privileged to meet.

Yesterday she repudiated the following statement, commenting on the advertisement in question. It reads as follows:

"It has come to my attention that two political advertisements, sponsored by the Committee for a Responsible Congress and bearing my name as a signatory, have and will appear in several Maine newspapers. These advertisements concern Senator Edmund S. Muskie.

"I wish to specifically disassociate myself from these advertisements and the implications that they contain. I am a part-time resident of the State of Maine. Therefore, I have a deep interest in the kind of representation that the people of Maine receive in the United States Senate. In this connection, I believe that Senator Muskie is a man of intelligence and integrity. He represents the people of Maine well, and I am giving him my active and wholehearted support in his campaign for reelection."

These facts raise many questions which will undoubtedly be the subject of considerable speculation. I am not interested in speculating upon them here this morning.

I find it distasteful to try to untangle the motives, the purposes, and the associations of those who would engage in such a perversion of our political processes.

I did not plan a life in politics. I became involved in politics, in the first instance, as an avocation which offered interesting, and possibly exciting possibilities to help shape the future of this State. If, in those early days, I had been asked to consider a fulltime political career, I might well have concluded that the rough-and-tumble of politics was not for me. As I became increasingly involved, however, I found it to be a stimulating and fulfilling occupation. True, it was highly competitive, often partisan, and a continuous challenge to one's alertness, ability, and durability.

It could be very rough-and-tumble. Nevertheless, there was a basic decency which, for the most part, in Maine, imposed limitations upon the use of "political license" to attack an opponent. And whenever those limitations were exceeded, the common sense and sense of fair play of Maine people could be counted upon to reject such excesses.

Over a quarter of a century Maine people have had an opportunity to know me well. As a member of the Maine House, as Governor, and as a U.S. Senator, I have been subjected to the searching scrutiny of a dominant Republican Party, the Maine press, and my fellow citizens. I think it fair to say that, because of the unusual nature of my emergence in politics, I have been subjected to more than the usual scrutiny.

The people of Maine, therefore, have a 25-year record, in which they have been closely involved, upon which to judge whether I would, in the words of the advertisement:

--"excuse lawlessness;"

--"undermine our national defense;"

--"forgive rioters and looters;"

--"accept the use of marijuana and heroin by our young people."

The people of Maine know there is nothing in my record to support such accusations.

We live in a troubled, divisive time -- a time when there is diminishing confidence in our political institutions and their capacity to stimulate the best instincts of our people.

Those who bear the responsibility of political leadership must be sensitive to these doubts and so conduct themselves as to re-establish that essential public confidence.

The Committee for a Responsible Congress has abdicated that responsibility and has earned the condemnation of all decent citizens.

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