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Remarks by Senator Edmund S. Muskie In Behalf of Howard M. Metzenbaum

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REMARKS BY SENATOR EDMUND S. MUSKIE
IN BEHALF OF HOWARD M. METZENBAUM
CINCINNATI, OHIO
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1970

I want to thank you for inviting me to Cincinnati.

I ran across someone recently from Ohio, who told me about a trip he made to Maine. He had traveled several miles without seeing any traffic directions.

So he became confused.

Finally, he spotted someone sitting beside the road, who looked as if he knew his way around.

"Say there," he asked. "Am I on the right road to Portland?"

The fellow half looked up. "This is the road all right," he replied. "But if you want to get to Portland, you'd better turn around--it's in the other direction."

Some people have also become confused this year about the directions we are taking as a nation.

But you should not feel confused here in Ohio about the directions you want to take--

--toward peace;

--toward opportunity;

--toward security.

And certainly you must recognize that the man you elect to the United States Senate will make a difference to you...to your children...and to the nation...for the next six years.

Almost four decades ago, one of our greatest President said:

"Democracy is a quest, a never-ending seeking for better things, and in the seeking... and the striving for them there are many roads to follow."

Franklin Roosevelt was right--and not even Spiro Agnew can make us forget it.

Now, if ever, is the time for the Republican Administration to describe the road it wishes to travel.

Now, when its chief spokesman is flying from State to State, speaking for candidates who think as he does.

Now, when Americans are asking for new directions to the future.

Americans want to know the way to cure the economy.

And the Vice-President talks about "nattering nabobs of negativism."

Americans want to know the way to reduce crime and stop violence.

And the Vice-President talks about "pusillanimous pussyfooters."

Americans want to know the way to end the war.

And the Vice President talks about "whimpering isolationists."

Two words are missing from the Agnew dictionary--plain talk--

--Plain talk that makes sense;

--Plain talk that Americans can understand;

--Plain talk that Americans want to hear.

Abraham Lincoln

And so the Vice President's performance reminds me of what I once observed of an opponent--he can compress the most words into the smallest ideas better than any man I ever met.

But no matter how many words he uses...and no matter how long they are...he still cannot hide the promises that the Administration made 20 months ago.

They were going to add 15 million people to the ranks of the employed.

And now more than a million and a half people have been added to the ranks of the unemployed.

Don't blame that on Democrats.

They were going to adopt a plan to end the war.

And now--almost two years later--they refuse to tell us when our men will be home.

Don't blame that on the Democrats.

They were going to make all the streets safe to walk on again.

And now more people are victims of crime than ever before.

Don't blame that on the Democrats.

Harry Truman used to keep a sign on his desk.

It said, "The buck stops here."

That sign belongs back in the White House.

And yet the Vice-President tells us that we have forgotten the heritage of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy.

But I ask you.

Who cares about the father who has to line up for his unemployment check in order to feed his family?

The party of Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy.

Who cares about the housewife who has to pay more money for less groceries?

The party of Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy.

Who cares about the young couple that can't afford a home of their own because interest rates are at their highest level since the Civil War?

The party of Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy.

Who cares about the senior citizen whose income remains the same while the cost of living continues to rise?

Who cares that unemployment in the Cincinnati area has increased more than 20% in only a year?

Who cares that too many Americans are still divided and angry? That they are hostile to each other? That their level of tolerance is low?

Yes--the party of Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy.

We know that the foundations of America are--

--trust;

--and fairness;

--and understanding;

--and compassion.

We know that the mortar which holds these foundations in place is self-discipline--

--and restraint;

--and peaceful conduct.

We know about our people's fears that the land is not steady...that the mortar is crumbling...that the foundations may collapse.

And why?

Have we lost the common courage that built this nation?

The courage to talk sense?

To face the issues?

To take responsibility for what happens?

No--I do not believe the American people have lost that courage.

But I believe some people have lost faith in the ability of Americans to exercise the courage they possess.

Courage is not just talking about what is right in America.

It is also preserving what is right.

That's why Howard Metzenbaum has supported a strong and progressive and active Democratic party in the state and for the nation.

Courage is not just criticizing what is wrong in America.

It is also correcting what is wrong.

That's why Howard Metzenbaum has gone to bat--on time and again--for the working man...for the consumer... for every citizen of Ohio.

Courage is not denouncing your opponents in the most scathing words you can find.

It is speaking up for the values you believe in.

That's why Howard Metzenbaum is campaigning through the length and breadth of this State, telling people where he stands.

My father came to America when he was seventeen years old--because his father wanted him to have a place to grow--free from want and free from fear.

He shared the hardships--and the opportunities--which this land had to offer.

His life was a belief in freedom...in the basic notion that every American is somebody...that everyone should be able to develop his own potential.

And he helped build a country--not always loving his neighbors...or praising them... or agreeing with them--but tolerating them...respecting them...learning to understand them.

Those are the lessons he handed down to me.

And I think I know what those lessons mean.

They mean that every American has the right--

--To be safe--on any street of any community at any time of day or night;

They mean that every American has the right--

--To be treated equally and with respect--wherever he or she tries to live and work;

They mean that every American has the right--

--To be left alone--free from noise and pollution and interference with his or her private life.

Peace, opportunity and freedom--as Democrats, these must be our objectives...if we are to ever lead America again.

They are objectives that Presidents Roosevelt and Truman and Kennedy pointed out to us in a special way.

They are objectives we must aim for--if America is to be wise... and open...and secure.

And no catalogue of unusual, unpleasant and unpronounceable words can make us desert these objectives--Vice President Agnew to the contrary notwithstanding.

We must be true to the finest traditions of the Democratic Party--a Party that has--

--offered dignity and opportunity and security to every American;

--that has restored our faith and trust and confidence in times of crisis;

--that has made our country the best hope of a trouble world.

We must start working together again;

--campaigning together again;

--winning together again.

And we must offer new political leadership--intelligent, dedicated and concerned leadership--leadership willing to try new directions--

--for peace;

--for economic growth;

--for self-respect and respect for each other.

The Democratic Party in Ohio can be proud of the man who represents your hopes for the Senate.

He is a man who reflects the best in our Party's past and the promise in our Party's future.

And no amount of campaign rhetoric can change his courage, his ability and his decency.

So let us start now--toward victory in November.

Let us start here--in one of our great industrial States.

And let us start together--with Howard Metzenbaum--for the United States Senate.