

The Senator is the keynote speaker for a program called "Seminar for the Sixties."

SPEECH

New Jersey Democrats - Atlantic City

Saturday, March 14

I am glad to be back here in New Jersey even though my ribs complained a bit when we crossed the state line.

As you know, the last time I was here in Atlantic City - talking to the American Association of School Administrators - I was involved in one of those sudden-stop automobile accidents and wound up with two broken ribs.

You know the Scriptures tell us that Adam lost a rib and got Eve. Well I didn't do that well. All I got was sympathy.

But I do want to say that any Democrat has a good feeling when he comes to New Jersey because this is the state that has pointed the way for the Nation's Democrats for the past 11 years.

You ~~were~~ all remember Robert Meyner's election as Governor in 1953. Well, that pointed the way to the Democratic victories of 1954 when we recaptured control of the Congress during the Eisenhower Administration and never gave it up.

Bob Meyner's overwhelming re-election in 1957 pointed the way to even bigger gains Democrats scored in the 1958 Congressional elections. One of the most welcome results in that 1958 election was the election of your own Pete Williams to the Senate and I am confident you are going to send him back to Washington for another 6 years of devoted service to the Nation.

Just 3 years ago you good Democrats here in New Jersey remember how all the so-called political experts in the press were forecasting Jim Mitchell's easy victory over Dick Hughes. Everybody outside New Jersey knew who Jim Mitchell was, a Cabinet officer under President Eisenhower, and nobody knew Dick Hughes except the people in New Jersey.

Oh, I remember how all the pundits were saying that Jim Mitchell's election as Governor would be the start of a Republican trend - one that would point the way to Republican capture of the House in 1962, some even looked hopefully to 1964.

Well, you know what happened. Dick Hughes ran one of the best campaigns New Jersey has ever had and Jim Mitchell never knew what hit him. And that Republican trend the pundits had been hoping for never came. In fact, they are still waiting.

I understand that at your Seminar today you are going to hold workshops to discuss the problems this state and the Nation face in the 1960's - civil rights, automation, protection of the consumer, help for our senior citizens and one you people know only too well, urban transportation.

I think you New Jersey Democrats are to be congratulated for having workshops and seminars of this type because it means you are doing more than just wringing your hands about the problems we face - that you are doing more than just crying about the mistakes of the past and denouncing the same old villains.

No, it means you are taking on the role of positive liberals. You believe as I do in the liberalism of advocacy and action.

As you know, in the Senate Pete Williams and I are engaged in a long, hard struggle to secure civil rights and equal opportunities for all our citizens. This is an historic fight and it is one we are going to win. We are going to win it because we know it is morally right and politically right, and we are going to win it because we know that internationally it is imperative that we come to the world with clean hands.

I would like to say that once we win this fight it will be the proudest achievement of the Kennedy-Johnson Administration. But it would be wrong to claim this for one Administration or for one Party because there is no partisanship about civil rights. This is a national problem. This is a moral issue. Therefore, once we have achieved victory all who contributed can take credit, Democrats and Republicans alike, as proud Americans.

This seminar and the workshops you are sponsoring today point up one of the big differences between the Republicans and the Democrats. We Democrats don't believe in drift, indifference and indecision. We Democrats aren't afraid to face problems, because we see them as opportunities.

As President Kennedy said in his memorable Inaugural Address, "I do not shrink from this responsibility - I welcome it." This is the credo of all Democrats. This is the credo of President Johnson, who is carrying on the New Frontier program of our late beloved President.

h We Democrats belong on the New Frontier. The New Frontier is still our goal, our objective, our commitment. The Republican goal is still the Lost Horizon.

New Jersey

Report to the People

- 7 -

✓ You Democrats here today are the custodians of a great political party that has been given the responsibility for governing this nation for a four-year period.

✓ Now, you and I are getting ready to go to the people this fall and give a report on what we have done during those four years. What should we tell them?

✓ First of all, we will tell the people that we Democrats inherited a political structure that was creeping along in serious trouble abroad; its money system literally on the rocks in terms of international payments; its prestige abroad at low ebb; unemployment mounting at home and the economy slowing down to a creeping pace, at best.

Neil Jersey

Get this Country moving Again

President Kennedy took over with a promise "to get this country moving again." This is a big country and it took a big man, with big ideas and great determination to get the country moving. And we got it moving under his leadership.

We got it moving to the point where today instead of talking about a \$600 billion economy, we have it; where progress is being made against unemployment; where price levels have been stabilized; where our international balance of payments situation is better than it has been in five years. These are just a few of the things.

But more importantly, President Kennedy got this country moving again to the point where the President of the United States can talk about peace today. He can negotiate for peace and not negotiate from fear. He can negotiate from strength - not from weakness. Now we can command respect from the Soviet Union to a point where they are willing, at long last, to talk more reasonably and sensibly about the problems in the world.

This didn't happen easily. You can be proud that your government has strengthened America to a point where it is the uncontested political and military and economic power in the world today. No combination of powers can even stand up against us.

All of this has made it possible for our new President - Lyndon B. Johnson - to offer some overtures to the Russians about disarmament. He can do it safely. Why? Because since 1961 the great President and fallen leader who we loved so much gave this country the tools, the sinew and the strength for our military establishments, our diplomacy, our foreign aid and all that makes up our national security.

Know this record. Be proud of it. This just didn't happen. It was worked on. It was planned. It had to be legislated and it had to be executed and administered. And we did it.

And we will continue to carry on that fine record under the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. I want you to remember those great words in President Johnson's address to the Congress after the death of President Kennedy. "Let us continue," he said. Those three words sum up the central theme of the Johnson Administration.

They also constitute a good platform for the Democrats to run on this fall. President Johnson will carry on the programs and policies of President Kennedy because the Kennedy program is his program. President Johnson played a major role in developing that program. He was a part of the team. I know. I sat there with these men. I worked with them.

JFK -
LBJ

Get country moving

- 12 -

↳ We Democrats have an obligation to point out
the fine record of the Kennedy-Johnson team and take
our case to the people.

↳ --We began an area redevelopment program
that helped economically distressed communities
throughout the Nation.

↳ --We built more nursing homes for our old
people in the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ years than in the preceding
200 years.

↳ --We built more housing for the elderly
in the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ years than the previous 100 and
we broadened the urban redevelopment, public
housing and college housing programs.

--We raised the minimum wage and extended
its coverage.

--We improved the Social Security program.

--We started a Food Stamp program for the needy, expanded the Food for Peace program and the school lunch and milk program.

And I haven't even started to list the so-called "major" actions yet.

--We passed the greatest tax cut in our nation's history - the most significant act of economic legislation since the Employment Act of 1946.

--We streamlined the Pentagon and modernized our defense establishments.

--We enacted the most far-reaching Trade Act since the Reciprocal Trade Act fathered by Cordell Hull.

--We have made the greatest advance in the field of mental health and the first major attack on mental retardation by any country in the history of the world.

--We have enacted the broadest, most comprehensive program of aid to education that any free nation in the world has ever known - aid to vocational schools, aid to medical schools, schools of pharmacy, nursing and other professional schools, as well as scholarship aid to college students and federal help for college construction.

This is a proud record. But this is only the beginning. I can tell you we are going to add to it. We ought to be doing more. And we will if we can get rid of some of those reactionaries who stand in our way.

When President Johnson gave his magnificent State of the Union address last month the Republican leader of the Senate said, "Why, that is a blueprint for paradise."

I didn't want to go quite that far, but if he thinks that's the case I'll buy it. There is one thing for sure, you will never get a blueprint for paradise from a Republican. ~~You can rest assured of that.~~

We Democrats have always taken pride in laying down blueprints for progress, for daring to dream, for carrying forward programs that will help all the people.

We recognize that our duty is to all people.
That's why we are not indifferent to the plight of
the one American in five who doesn't share the good
life in this Affluent Society.

That's why President Johnson has declared an
all-out war on poverty - an "unconditional war"
against poverty wherever it exists - "in city slums
and small towns, in sharecropper shacks, in migrant
worker camps, and on our Indian reservations, among
whites as well as Negroes, among the young as well
as the aged, in boom towns and depressed areas."

These are the goals that make the Democratic
party worthy of respect - a party of ideals, enthusiasm
and conviction. This is the reason we win elections.

I make one plea to my fellow Democrats. Let's enact our programs and conduct our campaigns without tearing anyone apart. Let's not set one section of the country against another; one group against another. Let's not indulge in personalities. Let us conduct ourselves with good manners, good taste and firmness in the right as God gives us the right to see the right.

I think the standard of conduct that we must have in 1964 will have to be judged by whether we are doing what is worthy of the memory of the man who graced this Nation, who commanded the admiration and affection of millions throughout the world - the Captain of the New Frontier who is no longer with us.

We are not going to get into the petty little peeves of politics, nor are we going to indulge in the personal backbiting that is the mark of the small man. We are going to be working on principles. We are going to be working for a better America.

I say to my fellow Democrats, every one of you who mourned and still mourn the loss of John Kennedy, that the best thing you can do is to be worthy of his faith, worthy of his memory.

The best way I know that you can be worthy of his memory is to see to it that the man he selected as his partner at the Democratic Convention in 1960 - President Johnson - has our unqualified support and that we serve notice on this nation that we intend to see that he is re-elected with a great and smashing majority.

###



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org