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PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PEOPLE:

THE CHALLENGE OF GOVERNMENT

REMARKS BY

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JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY

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Votes

Mr Allen
Girsch-ss-son

IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO ENGAGE AGAIN IN FRANK DISCUSSION
WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS ABOUT THE DEMANDING AND COMPLEX
SPHERE OF GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS. / I AM SURE YOU RECOGNIZE
THAT THE REAL TEST SCORE OF YOUR ABILITIES AND LEARNING
WILL ONLY BE RECORDED AS YOU DEVOTE YOUR TALENTS TO THE
CHALLENGES OF PUBLIC SERVICE, TO THE GRINDING PROCESSES
OF POLITICAL ACTION, AND TO THE STRUGGLE TO SHAPE
IMAGINATIVE AND PROGRESSIVE PUBLIC POLICIES. / AND IT IS
AN ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY THAT YOUR DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN
THESE DIFFICULT TASKS IS ESSENTIAL TODAY. / FOR, OUT OF THIS
CRUCIAL TIME IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICA, WE MUST WRITE A NEW
AND DECISIVELY IMPORTANT CHAPTER IN THE GRAND EXPERIMENT IN
DEMOCRACY, REDEDICATING OURSELVES TO ASSURING THAT OUR
GOVERNMENT IS TRULY A GOVERNMENT OF, BY, AND FOR THE PEOPLE.

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I HAVE SET MYSELF TO THE TASK HERE AND NOW OF COMPRESSING
ALMOST 25 YEARS IN THE WORK OF GOVERNMENT, SIXTEEN OF WHICH
HAVE BEEN DEVOTED TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE, INTO BRIEF
REMARKS ON THE ROLE OF A SENATOR IN THE FULFILLMENT OF
THIS NATIONAL ASSIGNMENT. I SHALL NOT ENGAGE IN A GRAND
SOLILOQUY ABOUT THIS MOST REMARKABLE OF GOVERNMENT
INSTITUTIONS. INSTEAD, I WANT TO DISCUSS THE HARD REALITIES
OF THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE, AS THE SENATE SEEKS TO ANSWER
BY ITS LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES A VERY GENERAL BUT NONETHELESS
BASIC QUESTION BEING POSED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, OUR
CITIZENS ARE ASKING: DOES GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS STILL
HAVE THE CAPACITY TO GOVERN? IS IT LISTENING TO THE
PEOPLE AND RESPONDING TO THEIR CRITICAL NEEDS AND CONCERNS?

Question

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IF WE ARE TO ADDRESS THIS QUESTION INTELLIGENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY, WE MUST DISPENSE WITH PUBLIC HAND-WRINGING, DOOMSDAY THREATS, OR SIMPLE PARTISAN POLITICS, GOVERNMENT CAN MAINTAIN A FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST WITH THE PEOPLE ONLY BY CLEARLY DEMONSTRATING THAT IT CAN ACT ON A PRECISELY DEFINED AGENDA OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES,
OUR GOVERNMENT MUST ALSO ESTABLISH A PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY DEDICATED TO THE IDEALS FOR WHOSE ACHIEVEMENT THIS NATION WAS ORIGINALLY CONSTITUTED. WE MUST, IN FACT, BE FORMING A MORE PERFECT UNION, ESTABLISHING JUSTICE, INSURING A DOMESTIC PEACE WHERE THE GENERAL WELFARE IS PROMOTED AND THE BLESSINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF LIBERTY ARE SECURED FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE, AND PROVIDING FOR OUR ADEQUATE DEFENSE GEARED TO THE IMPERATIVES OF WORLD PEACE.

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SEVERAL YEARS AGO CLINTON ROSSITER WROTE THAT "THE
LARGEST SINGLE UNSOLVED MYSTERY IN THE WHOLE REALM OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE IS THE SUCCESS WE HAVE HAD IN GOVERNING
OURSELVES ACCORDING TO THE FRUGAL, SUBTLE, AND EXASPERATING
DIRECTIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION OF 1787." CERTAINLY THAT
MYSTERY REMAINS WITH RESPECT TO THE POWERS AND FUNCTIONS
RESERVED TO THE SENATE UNDER THE EXPLICIT PROVISIONS OF
THAT DOCUMENT. A RATHER LIMITED AGENDA IS POSED BY
IMPEACHMENT TRIALS, THE JUDGING OF MEMBERS' QUALIFICATIONS,
THE PROPOSING OF AMENDMENTS TO REVENUE BILLS, AND ADVISING
AND CONSENTING TO THE RATIFICATION OF TREATIES AND THE
APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADORS.

Constitution

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AS WE ALL KNOW, HOWEVER, IT IS IN THE CONSTITUTION'S
SIMULTANEOUS SEPARATION AND INTERACTION OF POWERS AS STATED,
JUDICIALLY INTERPRETED, AND POLITICALLY APPLIED, THAT
THE GENIUS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IS DISCOVERED.

└ BUT IT IS IN THE POLITICAL APPLICATION OF THESE POWERS
THAT THE CAPACITY AND RESPONSIVENESS OF GOVERNING IS BEING
TESTED TODAY. └ FOR, IN ADDITION TO THE CRITICAL FISCAL
PROBLEMS CONFRONTING OUR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, THERE
HAS BEEN A PROFOUNDLY DISTURBING LACK OF NATIONAL
LEADERSHIP IN ESTABLISHING BOTH THE PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY AND
THE AGENDA FOR ACTION THAT I HAVE CITED AS BEING ESSENTIAL
IF THE TRUST OF THE PEOPLE IN THEIR GOVERNMENT IS TO BE
MAINTAINED.

Practical goals

STUDENTS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

HAVE PERHAPS ONLY RECENTLY APPRECIATED THE EXTENT TO WHICH
THE INITIATIVE HAS SHIFTED FROM THE EXECUTIVE TO THE
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ~~OVER THE~~
~~PAST FEW YEARS IN THE ENACTMENT OF LAWS AND PROGRAMS WITH~~
~~ESSENTIAL FUNDING TO MEET THE CRITICAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING~~
~~OUR PEOPLE.~~ ~~TO~~ DRIVE THIS POINT HOME, I NEED ONLY MENTION
LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE 91ST CONGRESS TO ACCOMPLISH A
MAJOR EXPANSION OF OUR HEALTH CARE RESOURCES, PROVIDE NEW
AUTHORITIES TO MEET THE HOUSING CRISIS, EXTEND VITAL HELP
TO THE CITIES AND THEIR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, INITIATE
FLEXIBLE CREDIT AND MONETARY CONTROLS TO HELP STABILIZE AND
STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY, IMPLEMENT STRONG POLLUTION ABATEMENT
PROGRAMS, AND INAUGURATE ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS TO SIGNIFICANTLY
INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS THE NATION.

Legislative Initiative

Legislative Initiative

HERE WE CAN IDENTIFY ONE DECISIVELY IMPORTANT ROLE
OF A SENATOR WHO, BY REASON OF BEING IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH
A BROAD SPECTRUM OF THE AMERICAN POPULATION, MUST BE ABLE
TO IDENTIFY AND ACT UPON PRESENT EMERGENCIES AND FUTURE
DEMANDS CONFRONTING BOTH THE STATE HE REPRESENTS AND THE
NATION ITSELF. BUT HE MUST LEAD AS WELL AS RESPOND. HE SHOULD
MOLD IDEAS, DRAW UPON THE VAST RESERVOIR OF EXPERTISE
ACROSS THE NATION ENCOUNTERED IN THE COURSE OF HIS PUBLIC
SERVICE, AND STIMULATE THE CONCEPTION OF NEW AND IMAGINATIVE
POLICIES AND PROGRAMS SO VITAL TO THE DESTINY OF OUR NATION.

BUT OVER THE PAST MONTHS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE
ALSO STRONGLY REMINDED EVERY SENATOR OF HIS RESPONSIBILITY
TO PERFORM EFFECTIVELY IN HIS ROLE AS LEGISLATOR -- DOING

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HIS HOMEWORK AND PUSHING AHEAD, ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS

IN COMMITTEE AND ON THE FLOOR, ON THE BILLS AND REQUESTS

ON WHICH THE COUNTRY'S BUSINESS DEPENDS.

*Procedural
reform*

THIS IS WHY I WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY, AT THE OUTSET

OF THE 92D CONGRESS, TO TAKE A DIRECT PART IN EFFORTS TO

ACHIEVE PROCEDURAL REFORM IN THE SENATE. IN THE LAST FEW

WEEKS THE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY HAS ESTABLISHED AND OPENED

UP MORE IMPORTANT INTERNAL REFORMS THAN WERE ACHIEVED IN

THE LAST TWO DECADES, FROM NOW ON, THE CAUCUS VOTE APPROVAL

OF A MAJORITY OF DEMOCRATIC SENATORS WILL BE REQUIRED ON

THE APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN, ON HOW MANY SENATORS

SHOULD SERVE ON A COMMITTEE, AND ON WHO SHOULD BE ASSIGNED

TO THAT COMMITTEE.

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THIS WILL BE A VITAL FIRST STEP TOWARD OBTAINING COMMITTEE

ACTION ON LEGISLATION THAT MIGHT HERETOFORE HAVE REMAINED

PIGEONHOLED. MOREOVER, IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT WHENEVER *any*

one A SENATOR REQUESTS IT, THE CAUCUS WILL BE CONVENED TO

DISCUSS ANY ISSUE OF SUBSTANCE,

L I HAVE ALSO BEEN NAMED TO A THREE-MEMBER COMMITTEE,

FORMALLY APPOINTED BY THE CAUCUS, TO CONSIDER AND MAKE

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CAUCUS ON THE QUESTIONS OF SENIORITY

AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE CAUCUS, *L* THE

"SENIORITY SYSTEM" HAS BEEN PINPOINTED BY THE AMERICAN

PEOPLE AS A PRINCIPAL AREA FOR CONGRESSIONAL REFORM.

Rule 22

Conference Committee

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L IT HAS DIRECT RELEVANCE IN THE APPOINTMENT OF HOUSE AND SENATE
CONFEREES FOR THE HAMMERING-OUT OF THE FINAL VERSION OF
MAJOR LEGISLATION PREVIOUSLY PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES --
CONFEREES WHO OUGHT TO REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF A MAJORITY
OF THEIR PEERS ESTABLISHED IN PREVIOUS VOTES.

L MUCH OF WHAT I HAVE DESCRIBED HAS LARGELY GONE
UNNOTICED. BUT IT IS A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE.
IT REPRESENTS A VICTORY FOR THOSE WHO ARE WORKING FOR
RESPONSIVE, REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IN THIS TIME OF
RAPID CHANGE.

L WHAT HAS BEEN NOTICED HAS BEEN THE EXTENDED DEBATE IN
THE SENATE OVER ITS PROCEDURAL RULE XXII FOR THE TERMINATION
OF DEBATE.

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YOU KNOW OF MY EFFORTS AS VICE PRESIDENT TO FACILITATE
THE MODIFICATION OF THIS RULE. I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT
ONCE FULL AND FAIR DEBATE HAS BEEN HELD ON A LEGISLATIVE
ISSUE -- PERMITTING THE SENATE TO FULFILL ITS UNIQUE AND
VITAL RESPONSIBILITY TO PUBLICLY CONDUCT AN INTENSIVE
EXAMINATION ON A MATTER OF IMPORTANCE TO THE NATION -- THAT
THE SENATE SHOULD THEN BE ABLE TO WORK ITS WILL TO PROCEED
TO FINAL ACTION NOT TO BE ABLE TO EXERCISE THIS RES
RESPONSIBILITY CASTS A HEAVY SHADOW OVER THE ~~VIABILITY OF~~
THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS AND THE PROMISE OF REPRESENTATIVE
GOVERNMENT.

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LET ME CONCLUDE WITH A GENERAL COMMENT ON THE ROLE OF A
DEMOCRATIC SENATOR TOWARD A REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION.
RECENT ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT IT IS
TAKING A SECOND LOOK AT PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S ADVICE,
RENDERED BEFORE CONGRESS IN 1862. WHEN OUR NATION'S
CAPACITY TO GOVERN ITSELF AND CHART ITS DESTINY WAS BEING
PUT TO THE MOST SEVERE TEST IN ITS HISTORY, LINCOLN SAID:

"THE DOGMAS OF THE QUIET PAST ARE INADEQUATE FOR
THE STORMY PRESENT. THE OCCASION IS PILED HIGH
WITH DIFFICULTY, AND WE MUST RISE WITH THE OCCASION.
WE MUST THINK ANEW; WE MUST ACT ANEW; WE MUST DISENTHRALL
OURSELVES."

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To "DISENTHRALL" LITERALLY MEANS TO "FREE FROM

BONDAGE." THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE DEMANDED A RELEASE

-- FROM THE ANXIETY OF A CRITICALLY DESTABILIZED
ECONOMY,

-- FROM THE CONTINUED TRAGEDY AND DEMORALIZATION OF
WAR,

-- FROM THE TENSION OF AN ESCALATING NUCLEAR ARMS RACE;

-- FROM THE HYPOCRISY OF A SUPPOSEDLY AFFLUENT NATION
WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE FAILING TO PROVIDE THE
MEANS WHEREBY OUR MINORITIES AND POOR FAMILIES MAY
ACHIEVE THAT VITAL SENSE OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND
SELF WORTH,

-- AND FROM CONTINUED GOVERNMENTAL DELAY IN THE MEETING
OF CRITICAL HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION, JOB OPPORTUNITIES,
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, AND STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC
SERVICE NEEDS.

IT IS TO THIS REQUIREMENT FOR NEW THINKING AND
NEW ACTION TO ESTABLISH A FUTURE OF PROMISE IN AMERICA, THAT
I WILL BE DIRECTING MY TOTAL EFFORTS IN THE SENATE. AS
A DEMOCRATIC SENATOR, I WILL NOT ALLOW PARTISAN POLITICS
TO STAND IN THE WAY OF PROVIDING PROMPT CONSIDERATION
TO ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS FOR MEETING THESE PROBLEMS.

BUT I WILL BE CONSTANTLY SEARCHING FOR THE MOST
EFFECTIVE ANSWERS, NEVER BEING SATISFIED WITH AN EXECUTIVE
BRANCH "IMPRIMATUR" PLACED UPON ONE BILL OR A SINGLE
COURSE OF ACTION AS BEING THE ANSWER.

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IT IS FOR THIS REASON, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT I HAVE INTRODUCED
MY OWN REVENUE-SHARING BILL, DESIGNED TO SUPPLEMENT, RATHER
THAN SIMPLY REORGANIZE, THE AID PROGRAMS THAT ARE NEEDED NOW
BY OUR STATES AND CITIES, AND TO PROVIDE INCENTIVES FOR
MODERNIZATION AND EFFICIENCY IN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

AND I WILL BE CONTINUALLY POSING NEW AGENDAS TO WHICH
I BELIEVE THE ADMINISTRATION HAS GIVEN INSUFFICIENT ATTENTION.

ONE CASE IN POINT IS THE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT AREA OF
RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ON WHICH I AM WORKING AS CHAIRMAN OF A
NEWLY ESTABLISHED SENATE AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE. IT IS
ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL GROWTH POLICY FOR BALANCED
RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IF THE CRITICAL NEEDS OF THE
DESTITUTE FARMLAND FAMILY AND THE CITY SLUM DWELLER ARE TO
BE MET EFFECTIVELY.

*Rural
Develop*

THIS, THEN, IS HOW I VISUALIZE THE ROLE OF A SENATOR
AT A CRUCIAL TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.
THE SENATE MUST SET ITS MIND TO A TASK OF THE GREATEST
IMPORTANCE TO THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION, AND THEN DO IT.
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT PERFORMANCE, NOT PROMISES; NO
LONGER WORDS, BUT ACTION.

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(SEE ADDENDUM TO REMARKS: THEMES TO BE STRESSED IN
QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION.)

ADDENDUM TO REMARKS: THEMES TO BE STRESSED IN QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION.

"WE MUST BE SEIZED WITH THE EMERGENCY THAT IS UPON US. WHILE SEEKING PEACE ABROAD, WE MUST SEEK EQUITY AND JUSTICE AT HOME. THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION IS MUSCLE-BOUND."

"OUR MOST IMPORTANT WORK TODAY IS NATION-BUILDING. . . COMING TOGETHER AS A PEOPLE IN A MUTUAL TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING."

"ALL THAT WE DO AS A NATION AND A GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO DEMONSTRATE A REAL CONCERN FOR PEOPLE. . . FOR THE ENRICHMENT OF HUMAN LIFE."

001352 "THE TIME HAS COME FOR GETTING ACTION. . . WE HAVE THE WEALTH AND THE TOOLS, AND WE CAN DO THE JOB IF WE PUT OUR MINDS AND WILLS TO IT. AND THAT DOESN'T MEAN JUST GOVERNMENT, BUT EACH AND EVERY CITIZEN IN THIS GREAT LAND."

"EVERY SENATOR OUGHT TO SEE HIS JOB AS MAKING AN IMPACT ON THE NATION. . . ON ITS THINKING, ITS POLICIES, ITS MOVEMENT TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE."

"INSTEAD OF TALKING ABOUT THE WEALTH OF THE UNITED STATES, WE SHOULD BE PAYING ATTENTION TO ITS WORTH. WE SHOULD TRANSFORM OUR EMPHASIS UPON POWER INTO A CONCERN ABOUT RESPONSIBILITIES. WE'VE SUBSTITUTED WEALTH FOR JUDGMENT, POWER FOR INTELLIGENCE."

"OUR PROBLEM TODAY IS THAT WHILE WE STRUGGLE TO BECOME PRIVATELY WEALTHY, AMERICA HAS BECOME PUBLICLY POOR."

"THE REAL TRAGEDY OF VIETNAM IS THAT WE'VE OVERLOOKED OUR OTHER PROBLEMS . . . WE'VE LOST OUR INTELLECTUAL VIGOR. . . WILL WE REALLY PUT OUR SO-CALLED 'VIETNAM SAVINGS' INTO DOMESTIC PRIORITIES? HAVE WE EVEN BEGUN TO PLAN FOR THIS?"

"WHAT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CLEAR IS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S SPECIAL REVENUE-SHARING PROPOSALS REALLY AMOUNT TO PROGRAM DISMANTLING."



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