

The original documents are located in Box 1, folder “10/7/74 - George Aiken Day” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Gerald Ford donated to the United States of America his copyrights in all of his unpublished writings in National Archives collections. Works prepared by U.S. Government employees as part of their official duties are in the public domain. The copyrights to materials written by other individuals or organizations are presumed to remain with them. If you think any of the information displayed in the PDF is subject to a valid copyright claim, please contact the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

*Spring Hill High School Band
Scott. Miller*

Beth

GEORGE AIKEN DAY

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1974

*Shirley
Geo. & Lois
Ken Park & Helen
Dick Malloy*

35 yrs ago

BEFORE I BEGIN, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I'M NOT

EXACTLY A STRANGER TO EITHER THE STATE OF VERMONT OR TO THIS

Univ. of Vermont Campus.

U-V-M CAMPUS. I ADDRESSED A SIMILAR FUNCTION ALMOST NINE

YEARS AGO TO THE DAY, OCTOBER 2, 1965. NOW I KNOW THAT YOU

VERMONTERS HAVE A REPUTATION FOR BEING HONEST AND DIRECT --

BUT I NEVER KNEW JUST HOW HONEST AND DIRECT UNTIL THAT VISIT.

*1974
1739

35*

WELL, I GAVE MY LITTLE TALK AND THEN I WAS TAKEN
TO A RECEPTION IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY. AND AT THE
RECEPTION A SWEET LITTLE GRANDMOTHER CAME UP TO ME, PUT A
GLOVED HAND INTO MINE, AND SAID, "I HEARD YOU GAVE A SPEECH
HERE TONIGHT." AND TRYING TO BE A LITTLE MODEST, I SAID,
"OH -- IT WAS NOTHING." AND SHE SAID, "YES, THAT'S WHAT I HEARD."

SO WITH THE THOUGHT OF WHAT ^{that} SWEET LITTLE LADY ^{said} STILL

FRESH IN MY MIND, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I AM STANDING UP HERE

TONIGHT WITH ALL THE CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ASSURANCE OF THE MAN

WHO SELLS LIFE INSURANCE TO EVEL KNEIVEL.

BUT IT IS A REAL PLEASURE TO BE HERE IN VERMONT AGAIN --

THE SKI CAPITAL OF THE EAST. IN FACT, I LEARNED TO SKI IN

NEW ENGLAND AND HAVE VERY FOND MEMORIES OF THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY.

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE PLEDGED AN OPEN AND HONEST
ADMINISTRATION -- AND I HAVE TRIED TO APPLY THIS HONESTY TO
ALL ASPECTS OF MY LIFE. SO I WAS IN A LITTLE BIT OF TROUBLE
WHEN BOB STAFFORD ASKED ME IF I WAS MUCH OF A SKIER. I SAID,
"WELL, LET'S JUST SAY I CAN SKI FOR HOURS ----- ON END!"

if you know which end

TONIGHT, I FEEL PARTICULARLY HONORED TO BE ASKED
TO JOIN WITH ALL VERMONTERS IN CELEBRATING GEORGE AIKEN DAY.
THERE IS AN OLD EXPRESSION, "LET GEORGE DO IT" -- AND FOR MORE
THAN FORTY YEARS THE CITIZENS OF VERMONT HAVE LET GEORGE DO
THEIR BIDDING IN THE STATE HOUSE, THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION
AND IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

IN GEORGE AIKEN, VERMONTERS HAVE A PUBLIC
SERVANT FOR ALL SEASONS. HE HAS THE ENVIABLE ABILITY TO
CUT THROUGH THE CHAFF AND GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER.

GEORGE AIKEN IS ALSO NOTED FOR HIS INDEPENDENCE
OF MIND. SOME HAVE EVEN CRITICIZED HIM FOR IT. I PRAISE
HIM FOR IT. HE HAS GIVEN THE NATION THE BENEFIT OF HIS DOWN
TO EARTH WISDOM, HIS LEADERSHIP, AND HIS GUIDANCE IN MANY
AREAS -- IN EDUCATION, ELECTRIC POWER DEVELOPMENT, BETTERMENT
OF RURAL AMERICA AND FOREIGN RELATIONS, THESE VERY DIFFERENT
FIELDS OF ENDEAVOR ONLY SUGGEST THE BREADTH AND GREATNESS OF
THIS MAN.

WE ARE IN HIS DEBT FOR HIS 34 YEARS OF SENATORIAL SERVICE
TO AMERICA AND TO VERMONT. I THINK IT IS SAFE TO SAY, AND IT
OUGHT TO BE SAID, THAT HE IS IN NO ONE'S DEBT. I UNDERSTAND
THAT IN GEORGE'S LAST CAMPAIGN, HE SPENT A GRAND TOTAL OF \$17.04,
CAN YOU IMAGINE SPENDING ONLY \$17.04 FOR A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN
IN THIS DAY AND AGE? GEORGE AIKEN IS THE ONLY MAN I KNOW WHO
COULD GO INTO A SUPERMARKET TO BUY FIVE POUNDS OF SUGAR WITH A
DOLLAR BILL AND COME OUT WITH CHANGE!

I WON'T FORGET -- NOR WILL YOU -- LOLA AIKEN'S
SERVICE TO VERMONT IN HER OWN RIGHT. A MEMBER OF THE SENATOR'S
STAFF FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, AND THEN AS HIS WIFE, LOLA
HAS ALSO DEDICATED HER LIFE TO THE STATE OF VERMONT AND THE
UNITED STATES SENATE AND THE SENATOR FROM VERMONT. I CAN
TELL YOU FIRST HAND, WHATEVER LOLA WANTS, LOLA GETS.

BOTH LOLA AND GEORGE HAVE WELL EARNED THEIR
RETIREMENT. AND BOTH KNOW THEY HAVE MY HEARTFELT GRATITUDE
AND THAT OF THE NATION.

AS IT HAS SINCE ETHAN ALLEN, THE GREEN MOUNTAIN
STATE CONTINUES TO PRODUCE OUTSTANDING LEADERS.

SENATOR BOB STAFFORD, WHOM I MENTIONED A MOMENT
AGO, IS ONE OF THE BEST. HE IS NOT MERELY AN ASSOCIATE OF
MINE IN RUNNING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, HE IS A PERSONAL
FRIEND OF LONG-STANDING WHOSE ADVICE AND COUNSEL I VALUE
MOST HIGHLY. IT IS INDEED A PLEASURE TO SHARE THIS PLATFORM
WITH BOB AND HIS CHARMING WIFE, HELEN.

CONGRESSMAN DICK MALLARY, NOW CAMPAIGNING FOR
THE SENATE SEAT GEORGE AIKEN IS LEAVING, IS A ^{great} CREDIT TO YOUR
STATE AND TO THE NATION. DICK WILL BE A VALUABLE SENATOR --
State Legislator / H. J. R.
A DILIGENT, HARD-WORKING, THOROUGH LEGISLATOR. I URGE
YOU TO SEND HIM BACK TO WASHINGTON AS A UNITED STATES SENATOR.

FORMER STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL JIM JEFFORDS (PRONOUNCED
JEFF-erds) WHO IS RUNNING FOR DICK MALLARY'S CONGRESSIONAL SEAT,
IS THE KIND OF PERSON I CAN ENDORSE MOST HEARTILY. JIM HAS
THE EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS TO CONTINUE THE
FINE TRADITION OF REPRESENTATION SET IN WASHINGTON BY MY
FORMER COLLEAGUES IN THE HOUSE, BOB STAFFORD, DICK MALLARY
AND THE LATE WINSTON PROUTY.

AT THIS POINT, LET ME NOT OVERLOOK A GREAT LADY WHO
IS WITH US TONIGHT -- JEANNETTE PROUTY, WIDOW OF THE LATE SENATOR.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SINGLE OUT ONE OF OUR HEAD TABLE
GUESTS. HE HAS A VERY INTERESTING NAME, POLITICALLY SPEAKING.

HE IS A KENNEDY I CAN ENDORSE. JUST AS HE HAS SERVED AS AN
OUTSTANDING STATE LEGISLATOR AND AS SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE,

"PEANUT" KENNEDY WILL MAKE YOU A GREAT GOVERNOR.

FIRST CLASS LEADERSHIP FOR THE NATION AND FOR

VERMONT IS URGENTLY REQUIRED. AND THESE MEN AND WOMEN

WHO ARE CAMPAIGNING ON THE REPUBLICAN TICKET ARE CLEARLY

FIRST-CLASS PEOPLE. *so I hope & trust you work for them so they can work for you.*

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO TALK WITH YOU

As we move closer to election day 1974
ABOUT ONE OF MY CHIEF CONCERNS -- THE PRESERVATION OF THE TWO-PARTY

SYSTEM IN THIS COUNTRY.

IN THE WAKE OF WATERGATE, THE NATIONAL POLLS INDICATE
THAT THE NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT VOTERS IS GROWING. AND THE
NUMBER OF PARTY VOTERS -- BOTH REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS --
IS SHRINKING STEADILY. *Unfortunately, we are doing worse
than our opponents.*

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THIS -- NOT FOR THE SAKE OF OUR
PARTY ALONE BUT FOR THE COUNTRY. FOR I AM CONVINCED THAT THE
FUTURE OF AMERICA IS DIRECTLY TIED TO THE POLITICS OF AMERICA.
AND THE POLITICS OF AMERICA IS BOUND TO THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM.

YOU KNOW, MOST OF US TEND TO TAKE OUR STABILITY,
OPPORTUNITY AND FREEDOM FOR GRANTED. BUT THESE THINGS DID NOT
MERELY HAPPEND. NOR CAN THEY ENDURE AUTOMATICALLY. THESE
TREASURED ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN LIFE ARE LARGELY THE RESULT OF THE
POLITICAL CONTINUITY THAT FOLLOWED THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR TWO-
PARTY SYSTEM. THIS APPROACH TO SELF-GOVERNMENT OFFERS A LARGE,
DIVERSE PEOPLE LIKE OURS CHOICE WITHOUT CHAOS.

AND IT HAS WORKED AND WORKED EXCEEDINGLY WELL,

not a part of our Constitution

ALTHOUGH NOT ENVISIONED BY THE FOUNDING FATHERS, THE TWO-PARTY

SYSTEM IS THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR POLITICAL BALANCE.

THIS IS NOT JUST A PERSONAL VIEW OF MINE. IT IS A

LESSON BEING LEARNED AND RELEARNED TODAY IN COUNTRIES WHERE A

HEALTHY TWO-PARTY SYSTEM HAS DIED OUT, OR WAS NEVER BORN.

FOR WHERE THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM FAILS, ONE OF THE TWO

both alternatives are bad for America.

EXTREMES RESULTS -- NEITHER OF WHICH IS VERY DESIRABLE.

ON THE ONE HAND, A MASS OF SMALL, REGIONAL OR CLASS-
ORIENTED SPLINTER GROUPS EMERGES, NONE OF WHICH IS CAPABLE OF
GOVERNING FOR LONG, ALTERNATIVELY, AFTER A PERIOD OF CHAOS
AND UNEASY COALITIONS, ONE EMERGES FROM THE MANY--MORE RUTHLESS
AND MORE UNSCRUPULOUS--AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS IS CRUSHED,
WHETHER IT IS A MAN ON HORSEBACK, OR A DEMAGOGUE ON
A PEDESTAL, THE RESULT IS TOO OFTEN THE SAME.

political
↑

WE NEED TWO STRONG PARTIES -- FREE, VITAL AND BROAD

ENOUGH TO TAKE UNDER THEIR WINGS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF OPINION --

TO SERVE AS THE TWIN PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY. AND THIS, ABOVE

EVERYTHING ELSE, IS THE REASON YOU AND I AND MILLIONS OF OTHERS

OVER THE YEARS HAVE DEDICATED OURSELVES TO THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER ONCE OUTLINED WHAT OUR VISION
SHOULD BE AS MEMBERS OF ONE GREAT POLITICAL PARTY, THE REPUBLICAN
PARTY:

"WE SEE OUR PARTY NOT AS AN END IN ITSELF," IKE SAID,
"BUT AS A MAGNIFICENT MEANS -- A MEANS THROUGH WHICH COUNTLESS
THOUSANDS OF DEVOTED CITIZENS CAN COOPERATE IN THE CONQUERING
OF PROBLEMS THAT BESET FREE MEN EVERYWHERE."

AT THE MOMENT, THE BIGGEST PROBLEM BESETTING FREE
1

MEN EVERYWHERE IS INFLATION. IT HAS CERTAINLY BEEN MINE,

2 months ago.

EVER SINCE I BEGAN THIS JOB, 1. I KNOW IT IS AFFECTING VERMONTERS

of all nations

AS IT IS ALL AMERICANS AND PEOPLE IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.
1

AS YOU KNOW, TOMORROW I WILL OUTLINE TO THE COUNTRY
AND TO THE CONGRESS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO DEAL WITH INFLATION.

WHAT I WILL RECOMMEND WILL BE A TWO-PRONGED UNDERTAKING. FIRST,

Strong & broad
I WILL CALL FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION WHICH IS NEEDED IF GOVERNMENT

IS TO DO ITS PART IN WHIPPING INFLATION. AND I MIGHT NOTE THAT THE

SUCCESS OF THIS EFFORT WILL DEPEND ON THE HELP OF TOUGH-MINDED

George Aiken
LEGISLATORS LIKE BOB STAFFORD, DICK MALLARY AND JIM JEFFORDS --

ALL OF WHOM I NEED IN WASHINGTON.

FURTHER, I WILL SET FORTH ACTIONS IN WHICH EVERYONE
in a meaningful way - for one's self + for our Nation.
CAN PARTICIPATE, IF EVERY CITIZEN ENLISTS IN THIS EFFORT, I AM
NOT ONLY CONFIDENT, I AM CERTAIN THAT WE WILL WIN THIS FIGHT
AGAINST AMERICA'S PUBLIC ENEMY NO. 1.

IN THIS BATTLE, I AM PARTICULARLY MINDFUL OF THOSE
WHO ARE UNEMPLOYED AND OF RETIRED PEOPLE LIVING ON ALREADY
SMALL, FIXED INCOMES. THE COMMITMENT I MAKE TO YOU TONIGHT
AND WILL REPEAT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TOMORROW IS TO HALT
THE RISE IN PRICES AND THE PROBLEMS IT FORCES ONTO EACH ONE OF US.

patriotic
WITH THE HELP OF GREAT PEOPLE LIKE YOU ALL ACROSS

AMERICA, WE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS EFFORT.

ONE FURTHER COMMENT IS IN ORDER BEFORE I CONCLUDE:

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT SENATORS AIKEN AND STAFFORD
AND CONGRESSMAN MALLARY HAVE KEPT ME WELL ADVISED ON
VERMONTERS' VIEWS. IN PARTICULAR, THEY HAVE TOLD ME, IN NO
UNCERTA IN TERMS, OF YOUR VIEWS ON AN INCREASE IN FEDERAL GASOLINE
TAXES.

THEREFORE, LET ME STATE TONIGHT WHAT I WILL SAY TO

THE CONGRESS TOMORROW: I AM NOT ASKING FOR ANY INCREASE IN

THE FEDERAL GASOLINE TAX.

*And, any speculation to the
country is untrue.*

I APPRECIATE YOUR INVITATION TO BE HERE THIS
EVENING -- TO JOIN YOU IN HONORING ONE OF YOUR MOST
DISTINGUISHED SONS, SENATOR GEORGE AIKEN -- AND TO BREAK
BREAD WITH SOME OF THE FINEST PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN.

THANK YOU.

#####