

The original documents are located in Box 40, “10/21/76 - Remarks at the Annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Award Dinner at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, N.Y.C.” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT AL SMITH DINNER

NEW YORK CITY

OCTOBER 21, 1976

- THANK YOU, YOUR EMINENCE, FOR YOUR WARM
WELCOME AND KIND INTRODUCTION
- MEMBERS OF THE SMITH FAMILY
- GOVERNOR CAREY
- SENATOR JAVITS
- SENATOR BUCKLEY
- MAYOR BEAME
- MR. SILVER / DR. RUSK
- DISTINGUISHED OFFICIALS AND GUESTS
- LADIES AND GENTLEMEN



[REDACTED]

LET ME SAY FIRST HOW BUSY IT KEEPS ME RUNNING A
COUNTRY AND A CAMPAIGN AT THE SAME TIME. / WE SEEM
TO GO FROM PLACE TO PLACE / WITHOUT PAUSING.

SOMETIMES IT GETS CONFUSING BUT IT IS ALWAYS NICE TO

COME BACK HERE, / TO PHILADELPHIA. (pause)

THANK YOU AND GOODNIGHT.

OH NO, / YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET OFF THAT EASY.

~~IF WE DON'T GET GOOD RATINGS ON THE DEBATE THIS MIGHT BE THE~~

~~BIGGEST CROWD I GET ALL WEEK.~~

YOU KNOW, ONE OF THE FIRST SPEECHES I MADE,

WHEN I BECAME VICE PRESIDENT DESIGNATE IN OCTOBER, 1973,

WAS HERE AT THE ALFRED E. SMITH MEMORIAL DINNER. /

I GOT OUT A COPY ~~AND~~ READ IT OVER. IT WAS VERY SHORT.

I HAD IN MIND AL SMITH'S FAMOUS POLITICAL MAXIM:

"DON'T SPEAK UNTIL YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY."

HE ALSO HAD A FAVORITE LINE WITH A SURPRISINGLY MODERN RING:

"NEVER PROMISE ANYTHING YOU ARE NOT PERFECTLY SURE YOU CAN

DELIVER."

IT IS NO WONDER THAT SO MANY POLITICIANS OF BOTH
PARTIES COME TOGETHER HERE EVERY YEAR TO PAY TRIBUTE TO
GOVERNOR AL SMITH'S MEMORY●

BUT THE DINNER ALSO GIVES OPPOSING CANDIDATES A

CHANCE TO MEET IN GOOD FELLOWSHIP FOR A BRIEF RESPITE

FROM THE ARDORS OF THEIR CAMPAIGNS -- AND I SINCERELY REGRET

THAT GOVERNOR CARTER IS NOT YET ^{here} ~~HERE~~.

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know

I ~~GUESS~~ HE WILL BE SITTING UP ON THE DAIS WHEN

HE GETS HERE. ^{*its*} ~~IT IS~~ EASY TO KNOW WHERE HE SITS. IT'S

SOMETIMES HARD TO KNOW WHERE HE STANDS.

We're

~~WE ARE~~ COMING INTO THE HOME STRETCH IN THIS CAMPAIGN,

AND TOMORROW NIGHT IS OUR LAST DEBATE -- ONLY THIS ONE

IS GOING TO BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS.

GOVERNOR CARTER IS GOING TO ANSWER HIS QUESTIONS

AND I'M GOING TO QUESTION MY ANSWERS.

I DO HAVE A MESSAGE FOR GOVERNOR CARTER,

~~HOWEVER.~~

IT'S ABOUT SOME NEW SECURITY MEASURES

WE'VE TAKEN.

WE JUST INSTALLED A SPECIAL LOCK ON THE

FRONT DOOR OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

IT'S JIMMY-PROOF.

I JUST THREW THAT IN•

I THINK I SHOULD HAVE THROWN IT OUT•

I WISH I HAD TIME TO MENTION ALL THE DISTINGUISHED

AMERICANS WHO ARE HERE.

LOOKING AROUND THIS HEAD TABLE

I'M NOT SURE WHETHER IT'S OCTOBER AT THE WALDORF OR

THANKSGIVING AT HUGH CAREY'S.

LET ME SAY JUST A WORD ABOUT YOUR EXCITING

SENATORIAL RACE HERE IN NEW YORK•

BEFORE THE PROGRAM, I ASKED CARDINAL COOKE

WHAT SIGNIFICANCE HE WOULD ATTACH TO THE FACT THAT THIS

YEAR JIM BUCKLEY AND PAT MOYNIHAN, TWO GOOD IRISH CATHOLICS,

ARE RUNNING FOR THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

HE SAID IT MEANT ONLY ONE THING:

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

TONIGHT, RATHER THAN TALKING ABOUT WHAT

DIVIDES US, I WOULD RATHER FOCUS ON WHAT UNITES US.

A DEEP BELIEF IN THE ALMIGHTY, A DEEP BELIEF IN THE DIGNITY
OF HUMAN LIFE, A DEEP BELIEF IN THE MORAL IMPERATIVE OF
morality
AMERICAN LEADERSHIP•

EARLIER THIS WEEK, CARDINAL COOKE DEDICATED A CHURCH IN

STATEN ISLAND WHICH HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY FIRE ONLY A FEW YEARS

AGO. THE PEOPLE OF THAT CHURCH HAD RALLIED AND WORKED

TOGETHER TO RESTORE WHAT THEY HAD ORIGINALLY CREATED AND BELIEVED

IN.

SIMILARLY, IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE HAVE RALLIED. WE HAVE RESTORED OUR BELIEF IN
OURSELVES AND OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

DURING OUR GREAT BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION THIS

PAST JULY WE FELT THAT RENEWED SPIRIT. THE SIGHT OF **THOSE**

TALL SHIPS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD MADE EVERY AMERICAN STAND

A LITTLE TALLER.

IT IS ONE THING TO CITE THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE IN
AMERICA, TO LIST OUR COMPLAINTS AND TO NOTE THE FRUSTRATION
OVER THINGS THAT DON'T WORK AND THE DISILLUSIONMENT WITH
GOVERNMENT THAT HAS GROWN SO WIDESPREAD•

BUT WE SHOULD DO MORE. OUR POLITICS OUGHT

TO MEAN MORE THAN NOTING A NEGATIVE MOOD IN AMERICA

AND BECOMING ITS CHAMPION.

OUR POLITICS OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO CAPTURE THE HOPE

THAT IS THERE IN AMERICA TOO, AND FIND OUT HOW TO NOURISH

IT IN SPECIFIC WAYS.

THERE IS MORE TO AMERICA THAN INDIVIDUALS AND

THEIR GOVERNMENT.

THERE IS A WIDE RANGE OF INSTITUTIONS IN-BETWEEN /

WHICH CAN BRIDGE THE GULF BETWEEN THE PERSON

AND THE HUGE IMPERSONAL INSTITUTIONS OF MODERN LIFE.●

THESE SAME INSTITUTIONS CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS WHICH
ARE BEYOND THE POWER OF MEN AND WOMEN TO MEET AS INDIVIDUALS,
AND BEYOND THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT TO EVEN UNDERSTAND.

THEY ARE THE COMMUNITIES WHICH A FREE PEOPLE FREELY
FORM - THE COMMUNITIES OF FAMILY, OF NEIGHBORHOOD, OF
FRIENDS, THE COMMUNITIES OF FAITH AND OF CHARITY.

THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN TRADITION FROM WHICH THIS

COUNTRY EMERGED, ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE

IN NEED, ESPECIALLY THE STRANGER, THE NEWCOMER. THOSE

OF US WHO ARE CALLED UPON TO SERVE A PEOPLE BORN INTO THAT

TRADITION DO WELL TO RECOGNIZE THE ABUNDANCE OF GOODWILL AND

NEIGHBORLINESS THAT CHARACTERIZES SUCH A PEOPLE.

IF WE ASK EVERYTHING OF A GOVERNMENT AS POWERFUL

AS GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA IS TODAY, WE MAY SOON END UP

LOOKING TO GOVERNMENT TO SET THE STANDARDS FOR COMPASSION

AND CARE.

AND WE MAY SOON FORGET THAT THE HIGHEST STANDARDS WERE

ALREADY SET FOR US NOT ON CAPITOL HILL BUT LONG AGO, ON TWO

LOFTIER PEAKS -- MT. SINAI AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES•

SO IT HAS BEEN A GREAT HONOR, YOUR EMINENCE, TO TAKE
PART IN THIS EVENING'S DEMONSTRATION OF HOW GOOD AND HOW
GREAT IS THE HEART OF THIS GREAT CITY, AND HOW STRONG ARE THE
BONDS OF COMPASSION AND CONCERN THAT UNITE US AS AMERICANS.

BEFORE I GO, I NOTE THAT AMONG THOSE ABSENT TONIGHT

IS ONE DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN WHO HAS BROUGHT HIS INFECTIOUS GOOD

HUMOR TO MANY GATHERINGS LIKE THIS, ONE WE CAN JUSTLY CALL THE

RIGHTFUL HEIR IN OUR TIME OF AL SMITH'S NICKNAME

"THE HAPPY WARRIOR."

MY GOOD FRIEND HUBERT HUMPHREY IS FIGHTING ANOTHER BATTLE TONIGHT
IN SLOANE-KETTERING HOSPITAL.

HE SHOULD KNOW THAT HE HAS OUR HEARTFELT PRAYERS FOR
A SPEEDY RECOVERY, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING HIM WITH
US AGAIN NEXT YEAR.

AND THAT VOTE AMONG US ALL, HUBERT, IS UNANIMOUS.

MANY YEARS AGO, I SHARED A BANQUET PODIUM LIKE THIS

WITH THEN VICE PRESIDENT HUMPHREY.

WHAT I SAID THEN I SAY AGAIN TO YOU, TO ALL MY
SUPPORTERS, TO ALL GOVERNOR CARTER'S SUPPORTERS AND TO
GOVERNOR CARTER HIMSELF AS WE HEAD INTO THE FINAL DAYS OF
THIS CAMPAIGN:

'THE THINGS THAT UNITE US AS AMERICANS ARE FAR MORE
ENDURING THAN THE THINGS THAT DIVIDE US . . . LET'S ALL
REMEMBER THAT BOTH DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS ARE STRIVING
TOGETHER TO CREATE A MORE PERFECT UNION, WITH LIBERTY
AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.'

"OUR UNWRITTEN COMPACT OF RESPECT FOR THE CONVICTIONS

OF OTHERS AND FAITH IN THE DECENCY OF OTHERS, ALLOWS AMERICANS

THE LUXURY OF RUGGED POLITICAL COMPETITION.

LET'S ALL WORK TO BANISH WAR FROM OUR SHRINKING WORLD AND HATE
FROM OUR EXPANDING HEARTS \- TO MAKE THIS WHOLE PLANET AS FULL
OF FRIENDSHIP AND FELICITY AS THIS ROOM TONIGHT."

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT