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Address by Governor James F. Byrnes at rally of South Carolinians for Eisenhower in Charleston, S.C.

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October 21, 1952



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**Address by Governor James F. Byrnes at rally of South Carolinians
For Eisenhower in Charleston, S. C., October 21, 1952.**

This is a new day in South Carolina. We meet to discuss the candidates and the issues in a presidential election. I am happy that here and elsewhere at such meetings, notwithstanding the strong convictions of our people, they can carry on such discussions in good humor and with respect for the views of those who differ with them.

For many years the leaders of the two major political parties displayed no interest in how the people of South Carolina would vote in a presidential election. They knew that regardless of who was the candidate or what were the issues the few people who voted would vote the Democratic ticket.

Four years ago the people of South Carolina at long last realized that the Democratic Party has deserted the principles upon which it was founded.

There is no reason why a man who voted against Truman four years ago should not now vote against Truman's candidate, Adlai Stevenson.

In 1952, in order to place on the ballot the names of Eisenhower and Nixon, only 10,000 voters had to sign a petition. Fifty-five thousand voters signed the petition.

That was a new declaration of independence. We have been slaves to a party label. Let us make Election Day our Emancipation Day.

For the first time in the history of South Carolina a candidate for the Presidency during a campaign came on September 30th to ask the support of South Carolinians. The welcome given General Eisenhower proved that we like Ike.

The Truman leaders in the State have time and again assured the people Mr. Stevenson will visit us. I fear he does not think enough of us to come. And I fear the Truman Democrats do not think enough of Truman to invite him.

I have been getting a little personal attention. Last Saturday a week ago, Mr. Stevenson in Nashville, Tennessee, referred to Governor Shivers of Texas, Governor Kennon of Louisiana and me as "embittered apostates." Before I announced that I would vote for Eisenhower, Mr. Stevenson had an entirely different opinion of me.

The United Press quotes Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt as criticizing General Eisenhower for accepting my support. Her husband always solicited and received my support.

General Eisenhower did not solicit my support. It was solicited. Let me read from a letter dated September 2, just two weeks before I announced for Eisenhower: "I hope I shall not prove too disappointing to you, both because of my long admiration and respect and also because of the insecurities I feel in view of my brief participation in national politics." That is signed "Adlai Stevenson."

In view of that letter, I am sure Mrs. Roosevelt will now join her two sons, Elliott and John, in voting for General Eisenhower.

On the same day and almost at the same hour that Stevenson was speaking in Nashville, President Truman, speaking to an audience of Negro voters in Harlem, asked what they thought Eisenhower and a dixiecrat Governor talked about at lunch, when at the conclusion of the lunch the dixiecrat Governor announced he was going to vote for Eisenhower. Mr. Truman expressed the opinion that they talked about taking civil rights from the Negroes.

The news reporters declared Mr. Truman was referring to me. He purposely created the impression that Eisenhower made some promise to me about civil rights and I then announced I would support him.

You know that I announced my support of Eisenhower on September 18, two weeks before General Eisenhower came to South Carolina. He did not have lunch with me. He did not arrive until the middle of the afternoon. He did not then, nor at any other time, discuss civil rights with me. I shall not descend to the usual language of Mr. Truman. I simply say his statement is absolutely untrue.

As to Truman's statement that General Eisenhower came to woo me or solicit my support, I shall next Monday night when I speak from Charlotte make some comments on who did attempt to win my support.

In this campaign we hear some queer arguments. I have received a letter from a gentleman stating he believed Eisenhower the best qualified man but he did not like his bedfellows, Senator Lodge and Senator Taft. I shall advise that gentleman if he is going to get out of a bed because of Lodge and Taft, he had better look in the other bed before he gets in it.

In that other bed he will find Mr. Truman. He will find Senator Humphrey who caused some Southern delegations to leave the Convention four years ago. He will find Senator Moody of Michigan who tried to make all Southern delegations leave the Convention this year. At the foot of the bed he will have to pay tribute to John L. Lewis, Philip Murray and Walter White, President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. If he cannot stand Lodge and Taft, he had better not go to bed at all.

One of the dangers confronting us is the danger of government dominated by organized special interests. I believe in government by the people. I would object to a government dominated by leaders of organized merchants and manufacturers and some racial group just as much as I object to one dominated by John L. Lewis, Philip Murray and Walter White.

I get comfort, however, from my knowledge that the average American is a man of independence. He will pay his dues to his church and his labor organization. He will follow his leader in religious and labor matters. But when it comes to voting for a President, he will follow his own conscience and vote his own convictions.

Candidate Stevenson now is trying to run against former President Hoover. He argues you should not vote for Eisenhower because dur-

ing the Administration of President Hoover twenty-two years ago there was a business depression. I recall the hardships of that period, but certainly Eisenhower had nothing to do with that depression.

The Truman Democrat will admit that. He will probably say that Eisenhower is all right, but if he is elected, we may have a Republican Congress and they would enact laws that would bring about a depression. The fact is that when the Hoover depression occurred, the House of Representatives was controlled by the Democratic Party. If any legislation brought about that depression, that legislation was passed by a Democratic House.

If they go back to a depression in 1930, they ought to go back to the depression of 1920. Cotton dropped from 39 cents in July, 1920, to 10 cents in July, 1921. Tobacco dropped from 23 cents to 11 cents. We had bankruptcies. We had suicides. That depression was during the Democratic Administration of Woodrow Wilson.

If we look back to the Democratic Administration previous to Wilson's, we find that in the Administration of Grover Cleveland as President and Adlai Stevenson as Vice President we had what was properly called a panic instead of a depression.

Neither Hoover, Wilson nor Cleveland was responsible for those depressions. It would be absurd to hold candidate Stevenson responsible for any action of the Democratic House in the Hoover Administration or for the depressions of the Cleveland and Wilson Administration. It is equally absurd to vote against Eisenhower because of a depression during Hoover's Administration.

If you disagree and think Eisenhower should be held responsible for the so-called Hoover depression, then you must hold Stevenson responsible for three wars that were started during the Democratic Administrations of Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman.

Now we have some safeguards against depressions—the Insurance of Bank Deposits, Unemployment Compensation, Social Security, and other measures urged by President Roosevelt and which I helped to enact into law. Yesterday Eisenhower again declared he favors the continuance of those laws. He believes in supplementing them with other social laws to make certain we will not again have bread lines in this country.

While the Truman Democrats will not accept credit for the wars started, they claim credit for all prosperity. They would give you no credit for your intelligence, your initiative and your energies.

They say the farmer should vote for Stevenson because he is prosperous. Farmers are receiving high prices, but high prices do not necessarily mean high profits. They forget the farmer now must pay high wages and high prices for everything he buys.

Those who work for wages and salaries are receiving higher incomes; but when the deductions are taken from your pay envelopes and your income taxes are paid, are you much better off?

I sympathize with the plight of the preacher, the teacher, the policeman, the fireman and all those who live on fixed salaries or fixed incomes. The hardships they suffer are due directly to the bungling of the Democratic Administration.

When the Korean War started, a ceiling should immediately have been placed on prices, wages and rents. Congress passed the necessary control legislation in September, 1950. The Democratic Administration did not put the controls into operation until February, 1951. In the meantime the cost of living increased month by month.

Instead of enforcing controls, Administration officials have granted increased wages to group after group. Then they have granted an increase in prices, which took from the workers the wage increases given them.

To a large extent our prosperity is a war prosperity. The record will show that when World War II started, the price of cotton and tobacco immediately increased and wages increased. Again when the Korean War started, the price of cotton and tobacco increased and so did wages. That was true of business generally. We want prosperity, but we want prosperity with peace. We do not want prosperity due in great part to war, to the shedding of the blood of our sons.

The other day I heard of a gentleman who when told, "We never had it so good," replied, "That may be true of you, but not of me. Two years ago I had a son, an only child. He was killed in Korea."

Let me talk about the Korean War. When we withdrew our troops from South Korea, we knew there was some danger of an attack from North Korea. In January, 1950, six months before the Korean War started, the Administration announced what it called our "defensive perimeter" in the Pacific area, inside of which area we would resist armed aggression. Korea was outside of that area.

The announcement was that if a country outside of that area were attacked, the initial obligation would be upon the people attacked to resist it, and those people would have to rely upon the United Nations for aid.

Mr. Stevenson is quoted as saying that the men in the Kremlin thought the North Koreans would not be opposed. Our statement may have misled them.

After our announcement, six months elapsed before the war started. We did not urge the other members of the United Nations to prepare to defend South Korea. We did nothing to prepare ourselves to resist an attack.

We had only the occupation forces in Japan. They were neither trained nor equipped for combat service. They were outnumbered. They were almost driven into the sea. Our casualties were shocking. They now exceed 120,000 and are daily increasing.

We are now drafting between 40,000 and 50,000 boys a month. The Secretary of Army, Mr. Pace, stated last Saturday that about 10,000,000 young Americans will see military duty in the foreseeable future. What

does he mean by "foreseeable future?" If he means ten years, that would mean we will draft one million boys a year which is more than twice the number now being drafted. We ought to know of these plans. There is uncertainty in every home. No boy can make plans for his future.

It is more than a year since we started truce negotiations. Now we know the truce was nothing but a communist trick to stagnate our armies while they built up their offensive power. Today the communists outnumber us in planes as well as in ground forces. Since the truce talks began, 6,000 American boys have been killed and 30,000 wounded.

The South Koreans are doing their part. We are supporting 400,000 of their soldiers. We have about 250,000 men in Korea. But all the other members of the United Nations combined do not have 50,000 men in Korea. Eisenhower says, and I say, they should bear a greater portion of the burden.

Some days ago General Eisenhower suggested that more of the South Koreans should be trained to take over the defense of their country. He quoted the ambassador of South Korea as saying, "Give us more guns, save your sons."

The President and the candidate of the Administration immediately denounced Eisenhower as giving aid to the communists. They declared the South Koreans were not sufficiently trained to take over the defense immediately.

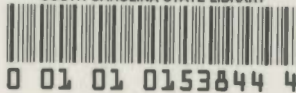
General Eisenhower did not say "immediately." He did not advocate abandoning Korea. We have been training some Koreans. Eisenhower says the earlier we start training more of them, the earlier we can reduce our forces.

President Syngman Rhee states that only one in every four South Koreans of military age is in the armed service. With that force they hold one-half of the line. The Koreans want to serve with the armed forces. If we train even two out of the four eligibles, we can greatly reduce our forces.

Mr. Stevenson is quoted as having said at Louisville we probably made a mistake in allowing our troops to cross the 38th parallel. That proves it would be dangerous for him to be President at this time. Our experts say that line cannot be defended. In any event, should the Administration announce as its policy that our forces will not go beyond a certain line and will not attack the supply lines of the enemy, it would invite defeat.

Eisenhower says we must continue to discharge our duty to resist armed aggression. But Americans are entitled to know whether our objective is to win this war. I do not want American soldiers to stand forever on the 38th parallel and fight and die as they have been fighting and dying during the last few weeks.

Communist China with its hordes of people can continue that kind of war for years. We cannot. They regard boys as expendable. We do not. Never before have we engaged in war without the objective of defeating the enemy and making him sue for peace.



General Eisenhower knows what war means. Like all men who have been in combat, he hates war. He knows the importance of preparedness to preserve peace.

I want to see an end to what Mr. Stevenson has called the Washington "Mess." But the candidate of the Administration cannot clean up the "mess" of the Administration. Before he started on his Western trip, President Truman declared that Stevenson had to run on the record of the Truman Administration. Stevenson did not dissent from that statement.

Truman is speaking daily at the request of Stevenson. I regret that Stevenson has not expressed disapproval of Truman's vicious attacks upon Eisenhower and his profanity. On the contrary he has praised Truman's speeches and begged for more of them.

Truman's cabinet members are leading the fight for the election of Stevenson. If Stevenson is elected, Truman will call on Stevenson to continue his policies and his appointees.

He will claim that the people have given a mandate to continue Trumanism. Stevenson will be under such obligation to him that he will have to comply with the request of Truman.

Do not be deceived. Do not deceive yourself. In your heart you know that would happen. There would be no change in Washington.

A vote for Stevenson is a vote for Truman and his Administration.

I have spoken at length about foreign affairs because if we can put an end to the Korean war and the threat of World War III, all other problems are relatively unimportant. The question for us is which candidate can best lead us in solving this problem of war or peace, life or death.

My personal relations with Mr. Stevenson have been very cordial. I have known General Eisenhower more intimately. During World War II and since then I have seen him in crisis after crisis. He is decisive and courageous. He has faith in God and love for his fellow-man. He is an inspiration to the youth of our land.

I firmly believe he is the best qualified man for the Presidency. I firmly believe he can do more than any other man to promote peace in the world and restore confidence in government.

Because I believe these things with all my heart, I hope you will vote for Dwight Eisenhower.