

Transcript of Kennedy Primary Victory Speech

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LOS ANGELES, June 5—*Following is the transcript of the speech on his victory in California, made by Senator Robert F. Kennedy shortly before he was shot:*

Thank you very much, thank you very much. Thank you very much. I want to take—can you hear this—You can't hear? Can you hear that? That's great. Can we hear from any of this? Can we get something that works? Just one moment. Can you hear on any of these? Can you hear on that?

I want to first express my high regard to Don Drysdale, who pitched his sixth straight shut-out tonight and I hope that we have as good fortune in our campaign.

Could I express my appreciation to a number of people first? To Jess Unruh for all he did, and I express my appreciation to him for his friendship and his help during this campaign and for his continued perservance and his effort and for all of those who have been associated with him. I'll always be very grateful.

Students Are Thanked

And if I could also express my appreciation to a number of other people, if you'd just bear with me for a moment—I'd like to express my appreciation to Steve Smith, who was ruthless but has been effective and I just want to say how much—how grateful I am to him, to his wife, my sister Jean, to my sister Pat, and to my mother and all of those other Kennedys.

I want to express my gratitude to my dog Freckles who's been relying and I don't care what they—as Franklin Roosevelt said, I don't care what they say about me but when they start to attack my dog—I'm not doing this in the order of importance but I also want to thank my wife Ethel. And her patience during this whole effort was fantastic.

Thank you very much. Freckles is going home to bed. He thought very early that we were going to win so he retired.

I also want to thank Tom—point out Tom Reese who

is here and supported us. I want to thank a number of other people if I may. All of those of you who worked so hard in this campaign. All of the students who worked across this state. The members of my delegation, our delegation who also worked so diligently and with such unselfishness across the state on my behalf and on behalf of this cause that we're involved in.

I want to thank Caesar Chevez, who was here a little earlier. And Burt Krona who also worked with him and all of those Mexican-Americans who were supporters of mine.

An Dolores Balante, who is an old friend of mine and has worked with the union. Thank her and tell her how much I appreciate her coming tonight. We have certain obligations and responsibilities to our fellow citizens which we talked about during the course of this campaign and I want to make it clear that if I'm elected President of the United States with your help I intend to keep it up.

I want to also thank all my friends in the black community who made such an effort in this campaign, with such a high percentage voting today I think it really made a major difference for me. I want to express my appreciation to them.

Labor's Effort Noted

To my old friend, if I may, to Rafer Johnson who is here. And to Rosie Greer who said that he'd take care of anybody who didn't vote for me. In a kind way because that's what we are. Smile pretty.

And I want to if I may, to just take a moment more of your time to express my appreciation to Paul Shrake, who—from the U.A.W., who worked so hard and all the other members of the labor organizations and members of the labor unions. I am very grateful both to him for what he's done and the effort that he's made on behalf of the working man here in the state of California. I'm very, very appreciative.

I'm very grateful for the votes that I received in the poll that all of you worked

for in behalf of the agricultural areas of the state as well as in the city. I think it indicates quite clearly as well as in the suburbs—I think it indicates quite clearly what we could do here in the United States.

The vote here in the state of California, the vote in the state of South Dakota, here is the most urban state of any of the states in our union. South Dakota, the most rural state of any of the states in our union, able to win them both. I think that we can end the division within the United States.

What I think is—what I think is quite clear is that we can work together in the last analysis and that what has been going on in the United States over the period of the last three years, the division, the violence, the disenchantment with our society, the division whether it's between black and white, between the poor and the more affluent or between age groups or over the war in Vietnam that we can start to work together. We are a great country and selfish country and a compassionate country. And I intend to make that my basis for running in the period of the next few months.

Ladies and gentlemen, if I can just take a moment more of your time because everybody must be dying from the heat. But what I think all of the primaries have indicated—if I can just take a minute or two minutes more of your time—what all of these primaries have indicated and all of the party caucuses have indicated, whether they occurred in Colorado or Idaho or Iowa—wherever they occurred it was the people of the Democratic party and the people in the United States want a change.

And that change can come about only if they—those who are delegates in Chicago—recognize the importance of what has happened here in the state of California, what has happened in South Dakota, what happened in New Hampshire, what happened across the rest of this country.

The country wants to move in a different direction. We

want to deal with our own problems within our own country and we want peace in Vietnam.

I congratulate Senator McCarthy and those who have been associated with him in their efforts that they have started in New Hampshire and carried through to the primary here in the state of California. The fact is that all of us are involved in this great effort and it's a great effort.

And it's a great effort not on behalf of the Democratic party, it's a great effort on the part of the United States, on behalf of our own people, on behalf of mankind all around the globe and the next generation.

A Dialogue on Debate

And I would hope—I would hope now that the California primary is finished, now that the primary is over, that we can now concentrate on having a dialogue or a debate I hope between the Vice President and, perhaps, myself on what direction we want to go in the United States.

What we're going to do in the rural areas of this country, what we're going to do for those who still suffer in the United States from hunger. What we're going to do around the rest of the globe and whether we're going to continue the policies which have been so unsuccessful in Vietnam, of American troops and American marines carrying the major burden of that conflict. I do want to and I think we should move in a different direction. Thank you.

So I thank all of you who made all this possible. All of the effort that you made and all of the people who's names I haven't mentioned but who made all the work at the precinct level, who got out to vote, who did all of the efforts that's required.

I was a campaign manager eight years ago, I know what a difference that kind of effort and that kind of commitment made. I thank all of you.

Mayor Yorty has just sent me a message that we've been here too long already. So my thanks to all of you and on to Chicago and let's win there.



TRIUMPH, THEN TRAGEDY: Senator Kennedy and his wife, Ethel, at victory celebration at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles minutes before he was shot. To the right of the Senator is Jesse Unruh, California Assembly Speaker.