

The original documents are located in Box 27, folder “June 28, 1975 - Campaign to Elect Melvin R. Jennings to Congress, Jackson, MS” of the Stanley Scott Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

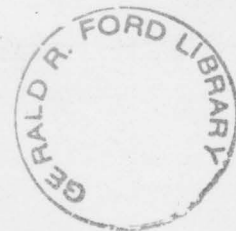
Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Bettye L. Scott donated to the United States of America her copyrights in all of her husband's unpublished writings in National Archives collections.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.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAMPAIGN TO ELECT
MELVIN R. JENNINGS

MASONIC TEMPLE
FUND RAISING DINNER
SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 1975, 8 P. M.
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI



BY: THE HONORABLE STANLEY S. SCOTT
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

POLITICS: A BRIDGE TO HUMAN PROGRESS

I APPRECIATE YOUR KIND INVITATION AND WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN YOU TONIGHT... TO BE ON FAMILIAR TURF.... TO RETURN TO THE STATE WHERE MY GRANDFATHER---THE REV. WILLIAM ALEXANDER SCOTT--GOT HIS START AS A PRINTER-PREACHER IN EDWARDS, MISSISSIPPI.

I KNOW THIS LAND AS YOU KNOW IT. I HAVE SEEN THE SORROW AND HEARTACHE, AS A NEWSMAN I WITNESSED SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WE CAME TO GRIPS WITHIN THE TURBULENT 60'S. BUT I ALSO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROGRESS THAT WE HAVE MADE IN THIS SECTION OF OUR GREAT NATION.

YOUR STATE, AS YOU KNOW, HAS THE SECOND HIGHEST NUMBER OF BLACK ELECTED OFFICIALS IN THE COUNTRY. IN OTHER WORDS, HAVING GAINED THE RIGHT TO VOTE, YOU EXERCISED YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOTING PROCESS. THAT'S GOOD AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP.

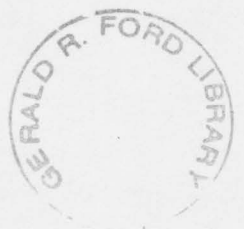


I MUST TELL YOU THIS BEFORE WE GET DOWN TO SERIOUS BUSINESS--I CHECKED WITH MY OFFICE THIS AFTERNOON TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON IN WASHINGTON. MY SECRETARY RESPONDED BY SAYING: "BOB STRAUSS, THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, IS STILL AT IT." I ASKED: "WHAT DO YOU MEAN?" THE SECRETARY SAID: "OH, HE'S STILL OUT SPEAKING TO LARGE GROUPS.... NOT AUDIENCES.... DEMOCRAT CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT"!

SERIOUSLY, I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE IN JACKSON TO JOIN ALL OF YOU IN PAYING TRIBUTE TO MEL JENNINGS--OUR NEXT CONGRESSMAN FROM HINDS COUNTY.

YOU KNOW, IT'S NICE TO GET AWAY FROM WASHINGTON...THE GLOOM AND DOOM THAT YOU READ AND HEAR ABOUT ON THE POTOMAC. BUT I AM NOT AT ALL DISMAYED WHEN I LOOK OUT ON THIS AUDIENCE.

I SEE IN YOU AMERICA SINGING A BEAUTIFUL SONG OF HUMAN PROGRESS. I SEE AN EXPERIMENT IN SELF-GOVERNMENT THAT HAS WORKED SUPERBLY FOR ALMOST 200 YEARS FOR MOST AMERICANS--



NOW I SEE THAT SAME GOVERNMENT BEGINNING TO WORK FOR BLACK AMERICANS, TOO. AND THIS WILL REMAIN TRUE AS LONG AS WE BELIEVE IN IT AND WORK TO KEEP IT THAT WAY. SO, I SAY TO YOU TONIGHT LET US BUILD BRIDGES TO HUMAN DIGNITY AND HUMAN PROGRESS THROUGH THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROCESS.

EVERY ETHNIC GROUP THAT HAS BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IT INTO THE SO-CALLED AMERICAN MELTING POT HAS DONE IT BY GOING THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ROUTE. I SAY IT WILL BE NO DIFFERENT FOR BLACK AMERICANS.

TONIGHT, I WOULD LIKE TO CONCENTRATE ON POLITICS. I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN FORCES WITH MEL JENNINGS. HE HAS JOINED THE BATTLE HE KNOWS WHERE IT'S AT. WE HAVE GOT TO GIVE HIM OUR SUPPORT. LET HIM WORK FOR US TO MAKE THE AMERICAN DREAM A REALITY FOR US.

I AM FREQUENTLY ASKED AROUND THE COUNTRY, "IS THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT DEAD?" MY CONSISTENT ANSWER IS A LOUD NO.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS SIMPLY THIS--THE LAWS HAVE CAUGHT UP



WITH OUR CONSCIENCE. WHAT REMAINS IS TO GIVE LIFE TO
WHAT IS THE LAW: TO INSURE AT LAST THAT AS ALL ARE BORN EQUAL
IN DIGNITY BEFORE GOD, ALL ARE BORN EQUAL IN DIGNITY BEFORE
MAN.

WHAT WE MUST DO IS REDUCE THE NOISE LEVEL... REDUCE THE
RHETORIC... MOVE PAST THE OLD CIVIL RIGHTS... BRIDGE THE GAP
BETWEEN FREEDOM AND DIGNITY, BETWEEN PROMISE AND FULFILLMENT.

THE ERA OF CONFRONTATION IN THE 60'S HAS BEEN REPLACED WITH
A FAR LESS DRAMATIC, BUT, I BELIEVE, A MORE DIFFICULT BUT
PRODUCTIVE IMMEDIATE AND LONG RANGE PROGRAM.

MINORITIES ARE NOW BEGINNING TO CONCENTRATE ON THE
POLITICAL APPROACH... PLACING GREATER EMPHASIS ON REGISTRA-
TION PROGRAMS, DEFINING POLITICAL ISSUES AND APPROACHING
THE VOTING BOOTH IN LARGER NUMBERS.

THE SIXTIES CONSTITUTED AN EXAMINATION OF THE WRONGS:
THE SEVENTIES AN APPLICATION OF THE REMEDIES. DEALING WITH
THESE QUESTIONS REQUIRES SCALPEL AND SUTURES, NOT THE
BOILING CAULDRON OF A FEW YEARS AGO.



THIS IS THE WORK THAT IS NOW UNDERWAY. IT IS THE WORK THAT LOGICALLY FOLLOWS THE SYMBOLIC AND LEGISLATIVE GAINS MADE BEFORE. IT IS THE PAYOFF ON THOSE GAINS. WHILE I THINK WE MUST AGREE THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, I WOULD ADD THAT THERE CAN NEVER BE ENOUGH PROGRESS UNTIL ALL AMERICANS ARE ASSURED OF PARITY ACROSS THE BOARD.

SOMETIMES IT'S EVEN HARD FOR STUDENTS OF RACE RELATIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT BECAUSE WE ARE TALKING ABOUT NEW TACTICS IN THE 70'S TO RESOLVE ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS CREATED BY PROGRESS MADE DURING THE PAST DECADE. MOST OF THE SYMBOLIC, EARLY GAINS STEMMING FROM CIVIL CONFRONTATION ARE BEHIND US. WHAT REMAINS IS THE LESS SPECTACULAR TASK OF RESOLVING THE MORE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT ISSUES AHEAD IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS WELL AS MINORITY RIGHTS. IT IS, IN MY VIEW, INDEED A SIGN OF MATURITY THAT IN TEN YEARS CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT HAS BECOME A PART OF THE BASIC FABRIC OF AMERICAN LIFE.



IN THE 60'S WE WERE ENGAGED IN THE PROCESS OF FREEING OURSELVES FROM THE MENTAL CHAINS OF SLAVERY AND SECOND-CLASS CITIZENSHIP. THROUGH FLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS WE PRESSED OUR BILL OF PARTICULARS BEFORE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WITH SIT-INS, JAIL-INS AND COUNTLESS OTHER FORMS OF MASS PROTEST.

NOW THE TACTICS HAVE CHANGED. MOST OF THE LAWS ARE NOW ON THE BOOKS. WE HAVE PUBLIC ACCOMODATIONS AND VOTING RIGHTS LAWS. WE REALIZED IN THE 60'S THAT IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO HAVE ACCESS. WE ARE NOW ENGAGED IN LESS DRAMATIC INVOLVEMENT. WE WANT TO OWN SOME OF THOSE LUNCH COUNTERS, HOTELS AND GAIN SOME OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRACTS. WE ARE FINALLY TALKING ABOUT BECOMING PRODUCERS AS OPPOSED TO AGE-OLD CONSUMERS IN THIS GREAT CAPITALISTIC, DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. WE ARE



FINALLY TALKING ABOUT GAINING A REAL PIECE OF THE AMERICAN PIE. NOW THAT WE HAVE MADE IT INSIDE THE FACILITY, WE NOW WANT A PIECE OF THE ACTION....AND RIGHTLY SO--THIS IS WHAT THE AMERICAN SYSTEM IS ALL ABOUT.

THE MOMENTUM OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IS CONTINUING, EXPANDING, AND ACHIEVING GREATER CONCRETE SUCCESSES IN BOTH OLD AND NEW AREAS OF ENDEAVOR.

SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE TO MAKE EQUALITY A REALITY FOR ALL AMERICANS? FIRST, I THINK, WE MUST ACKNOWLEDGE CERTAIN TRUTHS.

THE BLACK VOTE TODAY IS THE LEAST EFFECTIVE VOTE IN AMERICA. WE HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL ARENA--THROUGH BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS--IN THE SIXTIES, BUT WE HAVE NOT LEARNED TO PARTICIPATE TOO WISELY.

HERE'S THE SITUATION TODAY--IN JUNE OF 1975. A



CANDIDATE CAN ANNOUNCE FOR OFFICE AND BEFORE HE MAKES HIS FIRST CAMPAIGN SPEECH--IF HE HAPPENS TO BE A DEMOCRAT-- HE KNOWS THAT HE HAS FROM 70 TO 80 PERCENT OF THE BLACK VOTE IN HIS HIP POCKET. HOW CAN AN INDIVIDUAL OR A GROUP OF PEOPLE GAIN COMMITMENTS FROM POLITICANS WHEN THE POLITICANS KNOW THAT THEY HAVE THAT INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP'S VOTES AT THE OUTSET?

WE, AS A RACIAL MINORITY, HAVE GOT TO STOP ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED--BY THE DEMOCRATS.

AN INDICATION OF HOW STRONGLY I FEEL ABOUT THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM IS SIMPLY THIS: IF 70 TO 80 PERCENT OF BLACK AMERICANS WERE VOTING THE REPUBLICAN LINE TODAY, I WOULD SWITCH TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

LET ME SAY SOMETHING TO YOU ABOUT A SURE BET. PRESIDENT FORD INTENDS TO SEEK THE NOMINATION OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AS ITS CANDIDATE IN 1976. HE INTENDS TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT AND HE INTENDS TO WIN.



NOW IT COULD BE ARGUED THAT, BECAUSE OUR NATIONAL PROBLEMS ARE SO SERIOUS, WE SHOULD NOT BE WASTING TIME ON THE PROBLEMS OF OUR PARTY--OR ANY PARTY.

YET IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE OF OUR NATIONAL PROBLEMS THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO LOOK TO OUR PARTY AND ITS REVITALIZATION EVERYWHERE.

TO CARRY OUT OUR DETERMINATION TO MAKE SURE THAT REPUBLICANS ARE ON THE RISE, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE SOME FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR POLITICAL THINKING.

AS A STARTER, WE MUST DISCARD THE ATTITUDE OF EXCLUSIVENESS THAT HAS KEPT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY'S DOOR CLOSED TOO OFTEN WHILE WE GIVE SPEECHES ABOUT KEEPING IT OPEN.

WE MUST ERECT A TENT THAT IS BIG ENOUGH FOR ALL WHO CARE ABOUT THIS GREAT COUNTRY AND BELIEVE IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY ENOUGH TO WORK THROUGH IT FOR COMMON GOALS.



WE MUST BE PREPARED TO OVERCOME THE CYNICISM OF VOTERS WITH CANDIDATES OF OUTSTANDING ABILITY AND ROCK-HARD INTEGRITY. PEOPLE LIKE MELVIN JENNINGS.

I AM CONVINCED THAT THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE--IN THE PRESENT AND COMING MONTHS--PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR BLACK AMERICANS TO GAIN UNPRECEDENTED POLITICAL GROWTH AND INFLUENCE IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

WE HAVE A PRESIDENT--WHO HAS NOT CHANGED HIS COURSE IN HIS DETERMINATION TO BE PRESIDENT OF ^{ALL OF} THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT LAND. HE IS KEEPING THAT PLEDGE--AND INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO DO SO.

MARY LOUISE SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE, CONTINUES TO ARTICULATE HER CONCERN THAT ~~WE~~ BROADEN THE BASE OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, INCLUDING BLACKS AND OTHER MINORITIES.

CLARK REED APPROACHED ME IN WASHINGTON SEVERAL MONTHS BACK AND SAID: "STAN, WE HAVE GOT TO COME UP WITH QUALIFIED CANDIDATES TO CARRY THE REPUBLICAN BANNER IN THE SOUTH... I WANT



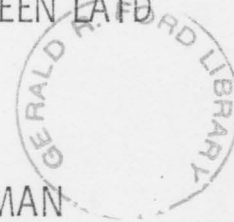
YOU TO MEET A YOUNG LAWYER FROM OUR REGION--MEL JENNINGS."

SO, I SAY TO YOU TONIGHT, WE HAVE THE ELEMENTS THAT CAN BRING US TOGETHER. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE SPIRIT THAT BUILT THIS NATION IS NEITHER DEAD NOR DIMINISHED. I AM CONVINCED THAT WE CAN FREE OURSELVES ECONOMICALLY IF WE FREE OURSELVES POLITICALLY FROM THE GRIPS OF THE DEMOCRATS.

AS DEMOCRAT COLEMAN YOUNG--MAYOR OF DETROIT--TOLD A SENATE COMMITTEE IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK: "THE DEMOCRATS HAVE THE MAJORITY.... THEY DO THE TALKING BUT THE REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATION IS THE ONE THAT HAS BEEN LISTENING AND ACTING SENSITIVE TO OUR NEEDS."

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN WE ARE NOW TALKING ABOUT FULL POLITICAL EQUALITY. AS I LOOK BACK ACROSS THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, I AM REMINDED OF HOW FAR AMERICA HAS COME... OF HOW MANY BARRIERS HAVE FALLEN... AND THE NUMBER OF PREJUDICES THAT HAVE BEEN LAID TO REST.

THE LAWS ARE NOW ON THE BOOKS... WE CAN ACHIEVE HUMAN DIGNITY AND PROGRESS THROUGH THE POLITICAL PROCESS. BUT WE



HAVE GOT A JOB TO DO...AND NO ONE IS GOING TO DO IT FOR US.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO BREAK DECISIVELY WITH OUR POLITICAL PAST AND LET THE REPUBLICAN PARTY KNOW THAT WE WILL NO LONGER BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY THE RHETORIC OF DEMOCRAT POLITICANS WHO KISS OUR BABIES AND PROMISE PIE IN THE SKY TO OUR ADULTS... ONLY TO BREAK THOSE PROMISES AS SOON AS THE VOTING BOOTHS CLOSE ON ELECTION DAY.

WE MUST LET THE REPUBLICANS KNOW.... IN MISSISSIPPI AND THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH, IN CHICAGO AND NEW YORK AND CALIFORNIA... AND THROUGHOUT THIS LAND, THAT IF THEY OPEN THEIR DOORS AND DESIRE A PARTNERSHIP IN PROGRESS... LET THEM KNOW THAT WE WILL RESPOND AND ARE NOT THE SLAVES OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY OR ANY ONE POLITICAL PARTY.

BUT WE HAVE GOT A JOB TO DO. WE MUST LOWER OUR VOICES. EASE UP ON THE CLINCHED FIST SYNDROME. JUST AS WE PROVED TO BE GOOD CIVIL RIGHTS MARCHERS IN THE 60'S, WE MUST NOW BECOME GOOD POLITICANS IN THE 70'S. JUST AS WE PROVED TO BE GOOD BOYCOTTERS IN THE 60'S. WE MUST PROVE THAT WE CAN



GET OUT A GOOD VOTE IN THE 70'S.

WE CAN MAKE THIS SYSTEM WORK FOR US IF WE TRAVEL THE TWO-PARTY POLITICAL ROUTE. LET US NO LONGER BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY THE RHETORIC OF ONE PARTY.

FOR THE GOAL WE SEEK--A BETTER COUNTRY THROUGH BETTER CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION--WILL DEMAND MORE OF US IN THE 70'S THAN MERE ONE-PARTY SERVICE. IT WILL DEMAND HARD WORK, HIGH PURPOSE, ENTHUSIASM AND UNSHAKEABLE FAITH THAT WE WILL ATTAIN A GOAL THAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THIS LAND. TWO-PARTY POLITICAL PARTICIPATION.

TO THIS GOAL, LET US PLEDGE OURSELVES TONIGHT.

THANK YOU.

