

"Best Qualified -- By Far"

BRYANT SPEECH LIBRARY

#6

For use of:
City and County
Speakers' Committees

SUBJECT:

- (1) "Bryant the Candidate"
- (2) "Bryant's Program"

Approx. Length: 12 min.

The campaign for governor is much more than a popularity contest between men who are engaged in a hand-shaking marathon around the State. We are involved in a bold venture to cut Florida's future to the pattern of our dreams.

How fortunate we are to have this opportunity. This is democracy in its finest expression. It is our solemn affirmation of our conviction that we are citizens of no mean state, and that out of the beauty of her lakes and beaches, out of the fertility of her soil, out of the magnificence of her cities, but even more, out of the nobility of her people and their capacity for service to the society of which we are the fortunate heirs we can and will build a future even more glorious than her past.

Let us not content ourselves this evening, nor in this campaign, with light platitudes about our children and their education. Farris Bryant states it this way: "Aside from the home and the church, the education of our children is the single greatest responsibility that we have. As we love our children better than ourselves so shall we

-more-

NOTE: Order additional copies all speeches
from BRYANT STATE HEADQUARTERS, OCALA, FLA.

of Florida are consumer taxes and as the people of Florida grow in numbers and wealth the tax revenues of Florida will grow with them. During the last six years not only has the number of taxpayers in Florida increased, but the amount of taxes paid to the State government by each taxpayer has increased 40%. Surely, unless we want to kill the goose that is laying the golden egg upon which we thrive, we must so manage our affairs as to live within these means."

I would like to talk with you, if time permitted, of so many matters with which Farris Bryant is concerned, almost or equally important to those to which I have referred. The necessity for constitutional revision, the development of our great university system, the continued expansion of our junior colleges, the promotion of conservation, the full utilization of our parks and recreation areas, the promotion of safety on our highways, are vital planks in the Bryant platform. He has an important position on the question of highway safety. I quote: "If we can, by improved driver training, improved public education, stricter enforcement, and better coordination of existing safety agencies achieve a reduction of only 10% in the number of lives lost on the highways in one year we shall have saved not only 100 precious lives, but the loss of multi-millions of dollars. I pledge myself to use the powers of the office of governor to save those lives and to conserve that wealth."

I must close. There is so much left unsaid. Yet if I should talk to you from now until dawn breaks we would have touched on only a fraction of the problems that will confront the governor of Florida during the next four years. You cannot place your faith in promises or even in the best intentions. My father used to say that the only light to brighten our path into the unknown future is the light of experience. The people of Florida must judge those who seek their favor and their confidence in the light of their record . . . their record of performance in public life, their record of service in private life, their reputation for integrity, their demonstrated capacity for leadership, the philosophy by which they have lived. When all is said and done it is on that basis that they submit their candidacy . . . it is in the record of the past that the voters of Florida must place their confidence.

Farris Bryant - by his record - is the best qualified candidate for governor - by far. Perhaps even in the history of Florida. I thank you.

#####

Bryant Speech #1

"Bryant the Candidate"

"Bryant's Program"

provide for them better than we provide for our other needs. Whatever is required in terms of money to meet our educational goals we must furnish; whatever support our educators require to achieve our educational goals must be forthcoming."

Bryant further suggests that "This campaign will be worth all my efforts and yours if out of it comes only an aroused interest in the public school program, in the need for classrooms for our children, in the qualifications of our teachers, and in the educational goals which are being pursued. I think that we shall find that the vast majority of the school program is good, and that part we must redouble our efforts to support, expressing in word and deed our gratitude to those teachers and administrators who are responsible."

"As your governor," Bryant pledges, "I shall provide the leadership for this arousal of public interest and enlist your support and participation in that campaign as well as this one. We shall establish joint citizens and professional educators committees properly staffed and financed to make a searching review of our whole public school system. Having reaffirmed that which is good and that which is needed, we will then throw our full support behind an effort to make our educational system the finest in the nation."

Bryant is also a strong advocate of an expanded higher education

program, and he is an avowed economist as witnessed by his following statement: "When our children finish their education we want them to graduate into a free economy. Second only to my concern about education is my concern for the continuing rise of governmental expenditures."

"A few weeks ago" Bryant continues, "I made the statement that 50 million dollars can be saved in the next two years in the operation of the government of the State of Florida. When I made that statement I intended to be, and was, extremely conservative. Since that time, further research has convinced me that the possibility for savings is far in excess of that figure."

"In 1953 and 1954 it was my privilege to serve as Speaker of the House of Representatives, and in that capacity to administer the financial affairs of that legislative body. We were faced there, as the entire state government is now, with a picture of increased demands, increased wage scales, increased costs in all areas. In spite of the long-established upward trend, in spite of the higher wages and other costs, we were able to reduce the cost of administration of the House of Representatives lower than it had been since 1947 and far lower than was that cost during the session which followed. It was so simple to do. We did not employ people to fill jobs that were not needed. We did not employ people for any jobs they were not qualified to perform. We made no purchases except to meet pre-determined needs.

There was no magic ... no hocus pocus ... no brilliant financial maneuvers. By the application to the administration of the House of the same principles of economy and efficiency that you bring to your own jobs and businesses we reduced the cost of operation 40% below the average for the 2 years immediately preceding and the 2 years immediately following the 1953-54 period and increased the efficiency of the House at the same time. 50 million dollars will be approximately 3% of the budget of the State of Florida for the 2 years that lie ahead of us. There is no question but that there is 3% waste in our state government ... there is only the question as to whether the people of Florida will elect a governor with the courage and ability to cut that fat from the body politic. I believe that they will and that you can show them the way."

Then, Bryant is the candidate who has expressed himself clearly on the matter of states' rights. He says, "I want to take this opportunity to make my position crystal clear, if it is not already so, on the matter of constitutional government as it relates to the State of Florida. There must be no uncertainty about the position I will take on this basic question.

"Certain rights were reserved to the states when the Federal Constitution was adopted, and I intend to demand the observance of each of those rights. I serve notice now that I will, in every legal

way open to me as governor, throw the full force of the State and the full dignity of the office I shall hold behind my purpose to maintain the integrity of the law. I will not countenance violation of our rights, and I will not condone any involuntary knuckling under to an invalid Federal encroachment.

"What I have said goes for our constitutional rights, including specifically the proposed creation of a Federal dictator to oversee our elections, the Federal government's attempt to force integration in our schools, and every other effort to transgress upon the constitutional sovereignty of the State of Florida. I shall not take upon myself the responsibility of the governorship of the State of Florida to preside over the destruction of the powers of this sovereign State.

"We fight a battle for men's minds. It cannot be won in Florida alone, though we must not weaken our stand on any front. Ultimately we shall prevail in our determination to maintain our freedom through the Federal system of an indissoluble union of sovereign states. But we shall only do so by so conducting ourselves that the rest of the nation comes to recognize the importance and the rightness of the stand for constitutional government which we take.

"I am proud to be a Floridian, and I shall represent this State with pride. Where we have made mistakes we will correct them, but I shall not apologize for the valiant efforts of a noble people to sustain

convictions which they believe to be founded in the bedrock of our Constitution. It will give me great pride to represent your views to Americans everywhere, and I shall do so with loyalty and fidelity."

In typical, direct fashion, Farris Bryant makes this pledge: "Our public schools will never be closed under any circumstances whatsoever while I am governor!"

There are two great weaknesses in the road program of Florida, according to Bryant, which have plagued it for a generation.

He states, "One weakness is the lack of money! We are a score of years and a billion dollars behind in highway construction. If highways could be paved with political promises there would not be enough room left in Florida to grow orange trees.

"One of the reasons we are so far behind is that for years we have been trying to pay off indebtedness of the 1920's, when irresponsible and short-sighted politicians mortgaged Florida's future. Even today in the bond markets of New York the ghost of that period still haunts us. I shall never be willing to repeat that foolishness.

"But there are steps we can take toward the solution of our problem. One is the establishment, over the next several years, of a revolving right-of-way fund which will permit the acquisition of rights-of-way for State highways in advance of need, on terms more

favorable to the taxpayer, and less disturbing to the property owners. When this is done we need no longer delay the construction of needed roads in exploding areas because of exhaustion of local funds for rights-of-way. We can build the roads most needed first, and do it without saddling huge bond liabilities on property owners.

"A second weakness in the highway program," Bryant continues, "and perhaps its greatest weakness, is the administrative structure of the Road Department. The allocation of road funds, and decisions as to priority and location of new construction, is too often a political instead of an economic process. Audits by the State Auditor are too little and years too late. There is no opportunity to review decisions made or contracts let. The arbitrary cancellation of existing road contracts by an incoming governor is not a cure for the weakness, but an indictment of the decision making process.

"County and city officials have been given no responsible part in the over-all highway plan, if such exists.

"After you have done me the great honor of selecting me as the Democratic nominee in the primaries in May, I shall immediately call together a committee to be composed of former road chairmen and road board members now removed from politics who can bring to bear on this great and important problem the full weight of their experience and knowledge. They know the weaknesses in our structure, as no one else in Florida can possibly know, and their practical experience is a vast

resource which we must tap. We can seek the services of the auditor of the State of Florida, the advice of the Legislative Road Committee, the cooperation of the existing Road Board and its staff, and the help of representative city and county officials. From these sources we shall put together a plan for the maximum utilization of the funds now available and available tomorrow in increasing abundance.'

"I do not hold up for you any illusion that my election as your governor will completely solve our road problems. But I do give you this solemn and confident assurance that we shall combine the most capable minds with the highest purpose to achieve the best roads in the areas of greatest need."

As to reapportionment, Bryant says clearly: "I am dedicated to the proposition that reapportionment of the Legislature of the State of Florida is a constitutional necessity. The Constitution provides that the Legislature shall reapportion itself, and that if they fail to do so the governor shall call them into extraordinary session and hold them there until they shall have performed their duty. This is a constitutional responsibility of the governor, and this I shall, without fail, do."

Bryant speaks of our state's future: "The economy of Florida is dominated by the characteristic of growth. More people make their living, more people enjoy prosperity, because of the fabulous growth of the State than because of any other single factor. Builders, realtors, lawyers,

insurance men, carpenters, masons, plumbers, electricians, furniture dealers, building contractors and a whole host of persons engaged in working for themselves and for others are able to do better than those in similar occupations throughout the southeast because in Florida there is an added factor of growth.

"Florida is going to continue to grow regardless of who is elected governor. It has been doubling in population every 20 years since 1830, and literally exploding since 1950. But because our economic society is so closely attuned to a condition of growth every effort must be made to see that our economy continues to expand. We must be concerned not only to bring new industries into Florida, but to bring into Florida new industries which can contribute the most to the quality of living which has been our greatest asset. Clean industry, paying good wages, assuming its fair share of the tax burden, must be continually sought. And while I do not for a moment think that the governor should consider himself a permanent chamber of commerce, the great prestige of his office and his sales ability should certainly be made available on significant occasions for the promotion of Florida."

Bryant has a firm position on taxation. He suggests that "People and industries who want to come to Florida are greatly influenced by our tax structure. We must make every effort to keep that structure attractive. At the present time approximately 85% of the taxes of the State