General Information

Source: Archival Film
Creator: N/A
Event Date: 08/13/1956
Air/Publish Date: 08/13/1956

Resource Type: Video News Report
Copyright: NBCUniversal Media, LLC.
Copyright Date: 1956
Clip Length: 00:03:57

Description

In keynote address at the 1956 Democratic National Convention, Tennessee Gov. Frank Clement decries big business. Followed by analysis of the speech by NBC News anchors Chet Huntley and David Brinkley, and analyst Bill Henry.

Keywords


Citation

MLA

© 2008-2020 NBCUniversal Media, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

APA

CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE

Transcript
1956 DNC Keynote Address
Governor FRANK CLEMENT: We must solemnly, but with sharp and vigorous determination, raise our hands toward heaven and say as Cordell Hull of Tennessee, the young David, the Sheppard lad who came to lead world Democracy toward peace and understanding said when he led 106 neighbor boys of a mountain section of Tennessee into the fight against the Spanish kings denial of rights and liberty in the Southern seas, “We are ready, sir, ready to fight.” So must we, as loyal Americans, lovers of freedom, believers in the right of all to the benefit of good government tonight as we hear the voices of the past, so must we borrow the immortal words of the men who will never be replaced, the great commoner, the boy orator, the silver tongue of the plant. We must borrow his words and serve notice to the world tonight in his words, you shall not press down upon the brow of the small businessman monopoly’s crown of thorns. You will not crucify the American farmer on a Republican cross of gold.
And tonight- and tonight, as we borrow from the past, let us build for the future in this great political year 1956 when we fight to restore the people to power in Washington. Do your duty. Work for what you believe. Stand up and fight. Get out and work so that you’ll not leave government in irresponsible hands. The fact that a man has made a million dollars, that he’s personable, doesn’t justify leaving a man in power who describes an incident that may claim your boy’s life as a small thing. The fact they might have good intentions at times doesn’t justify the economy of the nation being destroyed. The fact that a man’s got a military record behind him doesn’t justify him holding office at the expense of the people. But there’s one thing you can justify; you can justify begging God for guidance. You can justify studying the record, and after you’ve done it, going out and fighting and singing in unison you and I together of every race, creed and color. Let us go forward singing in unison the inevitable victory hymn. Precious Lord, take our hand. Lead us on. Thank you very much.
CHET HUNTLEY: Back in NBC’s TV 1 of course the, the big subject of this session of the convention tonight is the keynote address. And we might talk about that just a little more I should think with David Brinkley and Bill Henry here. It was my observation that it was in restrained ways sprinkled with some
Biblical and religious references. I think he demonstrated that he is quite a master of the metaphor and indeed is just about all we had heard about him. And one thing occurs to me; a keynote address is a tough assignment. It must be forceful. It must not offend any elements of the party and yet a good many political careers have foundered on a keynote address, as you will recall.

BILL HENRY: Governor Clement didn’t come by this great ability by accident. He’s what I call a working orator. He has been really working on this thing. When he had his press conference the other day, he told of the number of people whom he had consulted about this. He told of the manner in which he had studied past keynote speeches and we know he went out and tried this speech out himself. He tried it on the dog and took a picture of it and then examined that to see how he looked himself. Well I think that’s a pretty fine way to deliver this kind of a prize package.