

WAYNE MORSE QUOTES 1944-1969

INTEGRITY AND POLITICS

I am offering an experiment in politics, a program of principle above politics.

I am going to Washington without a string around a single finger. I am going there without any commitments to any group except the commitment I made to all groups: namely, that I will devote myself to furthering the best interests of our state and of our nation as the special representative of no group but as the public representative of all.

I will exercise an independence of judgment based on the evidence of each issue. I will weigh the views of my constituents and party, but cast my vote free of political pressure and unmoved by threats of loss of political support

Ever since I have been in politics I have tried to keep faith with the abiding principle of representative government which has motivated my actions in the Senate of the United States. It is the principle enunciated by Edmund Burke in 1774, namely that the primary obligation which the elected representative of a free people owes to his constituents is to keep faith with his gift from Providence – his conscience. It was this sound liberal principle of political philosophy which framed the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

Don't send me back to Washington unless you want me sit in the Senate as a free man – free to vote in the public interest as the facts and my conscience dictate.

Don't send me back to Washington unless you want me to exercise honest independence of judgment upon the facts as I find them. If the facts are not going in the same direction as partisan politics, then it's just too bad for partisan politics.

One great cancer in American life is that politicians don't enter fights, don't battle for policies, unless they believe they can win. I am not, in that sense, a politician. I believe great good can be accomplished by entering fights and expressing principles even though they will, at the moment, not be successful.

I judge a man by whether he votes the way he talks.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Many people are looking to see whether or not we can practice our principles as expressed by us over and over that in this country we stand for equality of opportunity for all, that we stand for non-discrimination among our citizens insofar as race, color and creed are concerned.

It has been a shocking thing to receive letters from businessmen who have the idea that economic activity is a white monopoly and that they have some right derived from property that enables whites to decide who shall share it and who shall not.

Our government is being scrutinized not only by many minority groups within the land but by the people of many races around the globe from the standpoint of the well known differences between the promises set forth in our Bill of Rights insofar as protecting the dignity and the rights of the individual are concerned and the practices of our government in effectuating those rights.

Protesting cuts in inner city assistance: If it would help, I would get down on both knees in this plea. We should put this special assistance into the ghettos of American where we know one of the great social and economic crises confronts us.

EDUCATION

I hold to the proposition that an enlightened citizenry is democracy's greatest strength and our nation's greatest potential wealth.

We have the duty laid upon us to open the widest door of education to all who have the innate capacity to step over the threshold.

It is a truism that a democracy, so far as its enlightened action is concerned, can be no stronger than its educational system. When we are dealing with the schools of America, which should be dedicated to the development to the maximum extent possible of the intellectual potential of our own people, we are dealing with the greatest security weapon a democracy ever possesses.

Vocational education: . . . is in keeping with the American tradition that the many tasks of the world are equally important – that a man who works with his hands should be just as well trained, have as many opportunities, be just as respected as the man who works at a desk.

HEALTH CARE/MEDICARE

We must remove the great fear that hovers over almost every family chimney in the land; namely, the fear of what will happen when illness or disease strikes. These people are fearful of what will happen, they wonder whether they are to be denied the best medical care the medical care can provide.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING

I agree that the United States, in the interests of peace and human survival, should take the lead in arranging an end to the H-bomb testing . . . Hundreds of nuclear scientists plus other national leaders also agree. Increased radio activity caused by H-bomb fallout could easily become disastrous to life on earth. It would be a great boost to our world prestige . . . if we proposed and obtained a worldwide ban on H-bomb testing.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

In a democracy there is no substitute for full disclosure of the People's business.

PEACE AND VIETNAM

The only hope of advancing the cause of peace in our time lies in the substitution of the rules of international law for the jungle law of military might.

The formulation of American foreign policy under our Constitution belongs to the people of the United States, not exclusively to the President and the State Department.

We have a moral duty to see to it that some way, somehow, we lead mankind to peace.

There is no hope for permanent peace in the world until all nations of the world are willing to set up a system of international justice through law, to . . . which will be submitted each and every issue that threatens the peace of the world, for final and binding decision to be imposed by and international organization as the United Nations.

Protest rallies . . . ought to be multiplied by the hundreds across America . . . The people want the facts, and they want a justification, which they have not been getting, because all they have been getting is propaganda.

I would be glad to walk out of the Senate if staying there meant I must vote to continue American outlawry in Southeast Asia.

PUBLIC INTEREST/LABOR

What I consider to be the greatest objective of representative government . . . is that government at all times must see to it that there are set up those . . . standards and protections which will protect the economic weak from the economic strong.

Union Movement: I consider organized labor to be one of the great strongholds . . . I think American employers should recognize that it is in the interests of our country as a whole, that organized labor be kept strong.

Any industry in this country that cannot pay a decent wage so that free Americans can maintain a standard of living of health and decency for the worker and his dependents are industries that we would be better off without.

WOMEN VOTERS, 1944

I feel that the women are going to exert more influence in the elections this year than the men because as I go around the state it seems to me that the women are devoting a great deal of time and study to the serious political situation which confronts the country.