

Kean University

Kean Digital Learning Commons

Florence Dwyer Report to the People Newsletter 1959 Florence Dwyer Report to the People Newsletter

7-2-1959

Report to the People Vol. 3 No. 26

Florence P. Dwyer

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kean.edu/cp_dwyer_newsletters_1959

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE
FROM YOUR CONGRESSWOMAN

FLORENCE P. DWYER - 6th District, New Jersey



1631 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FOR RELEASE:

Volume III, Number 26

Thursday, July 2, 1959

It's a good thing that the Fourth of July and other patriotic holidays come along every once in a while, especially to remind us that beneath the partisan battles of politics we really are a people united on the fundamentals of our way of life.

The fireworks of the Fourth are a happy substitute, occasionally, for the fireworks of angry political debate.

Yet, the two are not contradictory -- necessarily. For the fireworks exploded on the Fourth of July symbolize the freedom Americans won in the War of Independence and the liberty we preserved against every threat in the 183 years since 1776. And no matter how bitter it may get, political debate is the very exercise of that freedom.

It's something worth thinking about, even though it may seem pretty obvious. It means that, despite vigorous disagreements over important political issues, our political opponents -- either in our own or in the other party -- are just as loyal Americans as we ourselves are.

Debate to Decision

On the other hand, it means, too, that political debate is still vitally important. This is how we decide things in America: through discussion and differences and arguments, rather than by dictate or compulsion. Debate, if it is honestly and constructively carried on, is the source of enlightenment, compromise and decision.

There is every reason why we should feel strongly about the issues being decided and the positions and proposals we advance, because the future of our people and our country depend upon the wisdom of the public policy we ultimately follow. But our seriousness of purpose should not lead us to forget the equal conviction of fellow Americans with different ideas and proposals.

This is why I sometimes think the Congress could benefit from a clarification of the rules and procedures governing political debate. I do not want to tone it down or shut it off. But there ought to be a way of attaining a higher level of relevance, of subordinating emotion to facts, of emphasizing issues instead of personalities, of deciding critical public questions exclusively on their merits.

There ought to be -- but there probably isn't.

Joy of Freedom

Nevertheless, it's something to keep in mind this Fourth of July, as we reflect upon our history as free men and on the demands and responsibilities that freedom entails. Because freedom, if we are to keep it strong at home and help spread it abroad, requires a lot of self-discipline and hard thinking and careful planning.

There's another side to freedom, too, and that's the joy of it -- the sheer delight of being free, of knowing we ourselves are our own masters, realizing that the world is still waiting for us to make something good of it.

And this Fourth of July is an occasion for special rejoicing, because it represents the extension of our liberties and opportunities to a vast new frontier -- the 49th State, Alaska.

At 12:01 a.m. on July 4, the new 49-star flag will be raised officially for the first time in ceremonies at Fort McHenry in Baltimore -- where in 1814 an earlier 15-star flag inspired Francis Scott Key to write our National Anthem.

To me, the symbolism is meaningful and impressive. The American spirit is far from dead. We have come a long way. We have preserved and perfected our national independence and personal freedom. And we are still intent on expanding the frontiers of freedom. Our's is a living, dynamic tradition.

Moving Forward

This year it is Alaska -- the largest of our States. Next year it will be Hawaii -- the most distant and heterogeneous of the 50 sovereignties united in a great Nation.

And who will say where we will go from there -- or not go? Who knows -- we may even one day admit the nearly one million people of our Nation's Capital to the full regalia of citizenship.

Meanwhile, the fireworks our children explode the day after tomorrow and the

noisy, colorful rockets that zoom into the skies above our land will echo more deeply and distantly than ever before.

It will be appropriate and good if we pause in the midst of the day's joy and renew our pledge as a grateful and determined people to the ideals of equality and the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness indelibly engraved into our national heritage by the drafters of the Declaration of Independence -- the ideals that have united us and kept us strong and free.