



news release

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REMARKS BY JOHN M. BAILEY, CHAIRMAN OF DEMOCRATIC
NATIONAL COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON JANUARY 20,
1962 - AT SHERATON PARK HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

I will make my report on what happened in 1961 as brief as possible, since I want to talk mainly about the year ahead. What happened in 1961 is this:

The Democrats moved ahead; the Republicans moved to the right.

The Democrats moved a long way ahead, but the Republicans moved just as far to the right.

However, despite the movement of GOP Chairman Miller, and Senate Leader Dirksen and House Leader Halleck ever closer to the fanatic extremists who are a little nervous about whether Barry Goldwater isn't just a little bit socialistic, the radical right is still a pretty lonely place.

The American people have not gone right with the Republicans; the American people have gone forward with the Democrats.

This is shown by the current opinion polls on the popularity of the President and the Democratic Party. The President is far ahead of Mr. Eisenhower's popularity at the end of his first year. The Democratic Party is more popular now than it was on the eve of our Congressional landslide in 1958. That is what the Gallup poll reports.

Many people take opinion polls with a grain of salt. They say that real elections are the pay-off. To them the victory of one actual Democratic candidate who supports the Kennedy program means more than dozens of opinion polls showing that the people support the President and his program.

There were three clear-cut tests of this sort in the last year. At San Antonio there was a special Congressional election. The Republican was a conservative of the far right, but former President Eisenhower came in to speak for him. Henry Gonzalez, the Democratic candidate who backed the President's program won that one.

Then there was the mayoralty campaign in New York. In that race the Republicans entered a Rockefeller type candidate, or so his publicity said, and both Governor Rockefeller and former President Eisenhower campaigned for him. The Democratic incumbent, Bob Wagner, was pledged to a progressive program in cooperation with and in support of the Administration. Here again, the Democrat won; the Republican lost.

And finally we had a state-wide test in New Jersey. There the Republicans ran a former member of the Eisenhower cabinet, a man who was supposed to have a national reputation as a liberal Republican. The former President came into New Jersey to campaign for his former Secretary of Labor, James Mitchell, and he spent more time there than did President Kennedy, who could only make one appearance with the Democratic candidate, Judge Richard Hughes. Judge Hughes ran, of course, as a supporter of the Kennedy Administration. For day after day during the campaign the Republican press elected Mitchell. But the actual voters had other ideas. They elected Dick Hughes.

There you have it--a clean sweep of the key tests of strength in 1961 in actual elections. These were the ones we had to win to prove to Doubting Thomases that the Democratic party was on the march and strong at the grassroots.

The first such test in 1962 comes a week from today in the 13th District of Texas. The issues there will once again be clear-cut tests of strength. Judge Graham B. Purcell is a loyal Democrat and a strong supporter of the Kennedy Administration. I predict now that he will win and his victory will provide, not

evidence, opinion poll, but real-life evidence that the people are behind the President and his medical care program and the other pieces of progressive and necessary legislation which will be before the Congress at this session.

Back to 1961, since I have already reported to you in some detail in The Democrat, I will just mention a few highlights of that year:

We moved into a new headquarters with more efficient use of our space and installed an ambitious system of IBM equipment to handle our records and bookkeeping.

We reduced and mobilized our staff to cope with the changing challenges of a party responsible for stimulating and supporting a Democratic Administration in a year of CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY.

We broadened the base of our party, both in registration and in financial support.

We raised more money than ever before in a non-election year, thanks to the hard work of Matt McCloskey.

Margaret Price turned a plan for Operation Support into a going national program with 10,000 participants.

We launched The Democrat and have increased its circulation steadily.

1961 was a good year and it sends us into 1962 in good shape to face the big challenge of this year's elections.

We approach this challenge without any complacency or over-confidence.

The Republicans will have money and the Republicans will have the majority of the publishers and let me tell you something else. Recently the Republicans have been bemoaning their defeat of 1960 and explaining it away on the grounds that the Republicans were not as well organized as were the Democrats. I think it is true that we were better organized in some of the key areas. But I want to give you some startling figures you probably have never heard before.

At the request of the American Heritage Foundation the Gallup organization ran some national polls. Here are some results:

To the question, "did you or any member of your immediate family give any money to help a political candidate or party?" the response was yes, only 9 per cent, no, a shocking 89 per cent. 2 per cent were not certain.

Then the question was asked of those who gave as to which party got the money. The Democrats got 3.8 per cent, and the Republicans got 4.4 per cent. The remainder went to other parties or the respondents were not sure where the money went. I say to you that we can and must do better than that - I cannot believe that we won't get more than 10 out of every 100 voters to contribute to us if we only organize to ask them.

The pollsters tried to find out how many people worked for a party or candidate. The report says that only 6 per cent did work for a party or candidate, and 96 per cent did not.

Of these, 3.8 worked for the Republican Party and only 2.3 worked for the Democratic Party. Just think, less than three voters out of 100 are working for our Party!

This study gives us much more interesting information which I will not go into now. But even if you take the figures I have cited with a grain of salt they show us that we have just scratched the surface of our organizational potential.

There are millions and millions of people who would be working for and contributing to our party if they are asked in the right way by the right people at the right time.

We don't deserve to win next fall unless we start right now to do the work necessary to broaden the base of our party and its campaigns beyond the shocking figures I have just read to you.

No problem is more pressing and I am giving it top priority in our plans for 1962.

We are going to get this program moving through a project called Operation Know-How. The mechanics will be these.

The Chairman, the Vice Chairman and the staff members of the Democratic National Committee will attempt to go directly to the County Chairmen of the Party. We will try to give every county chairman an opportunity to meet with this task force in a state-wide or regional meeting.

This Democratic National Committee task force will bring to these meetings the sum of the political skills of its members along with the knowledge which has been gathered through the operations of the subcommittees of the National Committee, through interviews with candidates, candidates' questionnaires, opinion polls and all other available sources of political information.

This operation will give county chairmen the opportunity to:

Know how to conduct a successful registration drive;

Know how to set up the most efficient organization to get voters to the polls;

Know how to raise campaign funds;

Know how to spend these funds effectively;

Know how to get the maximum of favorable publicity;

Know how to recruit good candidates;

Know how to build a campaign on strong Democratic issues and weak Republican ones;

Know how to reach groups with special problems such as the aged or members of minorities;

Know how to recruit more women into Democratic activities and to use this womanpower efficiently;

Know how to attract more young people into the Party and to increase the vote of young people;

Know how, in sum, to conduct an effective year-round program and an effective campaign at the county, ward and precinct level.

No party has ever conducted such an ambitious program of organizational training. It will not succeed without your full support and cooperation. But it must succeed.

The stakes are great. The Republicans have been in a Rip Van Winkle slumber for years on issues and organization. Now they are coming out of their sleep insofar as organizational activities are concerned. They are planning a vigorous and expensive drive to make full use of modern organizational techniques.

We must match them in organizational vigor and effectiveness. When we do-- and I say when instead of if because we can and will match them in this area--we will win on the issues. After all, there is no person now in sight in the Republican Party who can drag that party's present leadership, as Adlai Stevenson puts it, "kicking and screaming into the twentieth century" in time for this year's election.

Let me conclude with this warning. The backward look of the Republican Party does not mean that we can afford to lose our forward look. The American people have turned to us for positive leadership in the White House and positive legislation in the Congress. You and I must mobilize ^{public} opinion to support the President's legislative program.

Powerful but selfish allies will be working with the obstructionist Republican leadership in the Congress to block the President's program. They must not accomplish their purposes and they will not accomplish them if they are faced by an aroused and enlightened public.

The President has said many times that he regards the Democratic Party as the

means to an end--the betterment of our country. So first we must strengthen and expand our organization and then we must use that organization to enlighten the public.

That is our road to victory--not merely for the sake of defeating our Republican adversaries--but for the sake of keeping America on the move, moving forward with our great President.

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