



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

47-S-69

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
JOHN A. VOLPE, AT THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY, U. S. SENATOR
HIRAM L. FONG, TRIBUTE DINNER, SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1969,
ROYAL HAWAIIAN HOTEL, MONARCH ROOM, 6:30 P. M.

We are honoring tonight a man who has given the bulk of his adult life in service to the great State of Hawaii and to the Nation. Let me express my congratulations and appreciation to the friends of Senator Fong for sponsoring this most auspicious event. Hiram Fong is the kind of active and concerned public servant who provides the motive power to make democracy work.

His life, as a matter of fact, is an example of democracy in action. You know, he and I have a lot in common. Our parents were immigrants. We started our lives as laboring men -- a fact we are both intensely proud of. I was a hod carrier as a young man and Hiram Fong was a shoe shine boy.

When Hiram was at Harvard Law School, I'll bet he never dreamed there would come a time when his friends from all over the country would gather to give him a dinner as impressive as this one. I won't claim that's all due to a Harvard law degree -- I know there was one heck of a lot of hard work in it, too.

(more)

I know how hard Hiram works because we labored together during the campaign last year on the Republican Task Force, formulating issues and drawing up positions. On many occasions Hiram Fong gave President Nixon the benefit of his experience, his wisdom and his political know-how. And I might add that he continues to help this Administration with advice from the vantage point of his position as a key member of the appropriations and judiciary committees.

Senator Fong is a man of many talents -- and that has certainly been well outlined here tonight. He could have leaned back on his accomplishments and taken it easy for the rest of his life. Fortunately for the Republican Party in this State, and fortunately for the Nation, Hiram Fong chose instead to devote his life to the greatest cause of all -- public service.

I have only been in Washington for a brief seven months, but on a number of occasions I have witnessed this service, what it has meant and what it will mean for this country.

Hiram Fong is dedicated to making transportation serve the broad needs of modern America. Coming from a beautiful State such as this he is sensitive to the impact of transportation systems on the environment we live in. I know from discussions with him that he is urgently committed to making our highways and airports fit comfortably into the landscape so as to protect our heritage of historic places and natural beauty. He is acutely aware that better transportation is a critical factor in improving access to jobs, to schooling, and to community services. Senator Fong has long supported public transportation in our crowded cities. He was instrumental in getting Hawaii into the Interstate Highway System. He believes in and supports an efficient and balanced system of transportation for this growing country.

The Nixon Administration has concluded the first seven months now, and you and I can be proud that the confidence gap of earlier years is being plugged. We have developed a sound strategy of effective government and we are going to implement that strategy in transportation and other areas with great vigor in the coming months. With the help of men like Senator Fong in the Congress we can create a better America.

Our Nation is the Nation to which others look -- even when they are criticizing -- to set a moral and practical example for the people of the world. Let us be equal to our destiny. Let us not be disheartened by the long struggle. Let us be true to the example and leadership quality of men like Hiram Fong. And let us be true, as he has been, to the Hawaiian motto: "The life of the land is preserved in righteousness." Guided by such men of vision as he, this republic will not only endure, it shall prevail.

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