

Neshoba County Fair

July 27, 1971

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
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Speakers: Waller, William; Winter, William

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Note: Only side 1 of this tape contained speeches from the Neshoba County Fair.

AU 1027 – SIDE 1

CAPERS: This is Charlotte Capers testing before going to the Neshoba County Fair July 27, 1971. Eleana is looking with a reflective expression.

ANNOUNCER: ...secure some vaccines for the state of Mississippi. He, perhaps, will be with us tomorrow [inaudible]. Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is my distinct pleasure to present to you our next speaker as a candidate for the governor's office of the state of Mississippi. Your next speaker has served twice as District Attorney of Hinds County. He's a very successful attorney and now practices law in the city of Jackson. Ladies and gentlemen, it is my distinct pleasure to present to you the Honorable Bill Waller. Mr. Waller.

WALLER: The people of Mississippi, ladies and gentlemen, will not stand for four more years of machine politics.

We had the good fortune of being in 82 counties and over 200 Towns [with one of our] committees working for the next governor. The people tell me, from all walks of life, that we can't stand four more years of machine politics. And they're saying to me, "Bill, next time, let's make a change."

I want to take the personal privilege of introducing the best campaigner, the best speaker, and the reason why we're going to win the governor's race. My beloved wife, a lady who's working as hard as I am to get more votes than I am, and a lady who'll be in the mansion to [inaudible] those votes for four years, Carroll Waller. Would you stand up, Carroll?

Here she is over here, folks, on [inaudible]. We all know [inaudible] a distinguished Mississippi athlete, a man who graduated Mississippi State University [inaudible] on the gridiron, and a man who's leading our youth in the state of Mississippi, Sonny Mulhern. Would you stand up, Sonny. Here he is over here.

Three weeks ago, ladies and gentlemen, we said that Bill Waller was the fastest rising candidate in the governor's race. After the events of the last three weeks [inaudible] and Meridian where we were on live television last night, I'm saying that we are no longer the fastest rising candidate, we're on top.

We are so strong in the governor's race today, [moving for a peak] next Tuesday that the machine politicians in Jackson, that I call the Capitol Street Gang, are nervous. They're shaking. And [inaudible] take some tranquilizers. They've gone out over the state and [fought]. They've really gone out and bought all the [hair tint] they can find, and they sending out white suits to the cleaners every hour on the hour.

I want to talk to you about the most positive platform. The candidate that has the plan to move Mississippi, and I want to talk to you about a part of that platform right now. I want to talk to you about highways, about state employees and the highway patrol, about recreation and tourism, about 644,000 people that buy hunting and fishing licenses every year. I'm going to talk to you about our youth, our retired citizens, and I'm going to tell you how all the people of Mississippi are going to elect a new man as governor. The reason why we're so strong in the governor's race is because the [crisis] and highways is worse today than it was four years ago. The present machine politicians in Mississippi and everyone who is a part of that machine has failed to deliver the highways. In fact, they've failed to deliver a plan for highways, and this is why the people want a change. The people who want highways are supporting Bill Waller in vast numbers across Mississippi. Thank you.

Two points on the highway program. We're going to have highways, folks, because we're going to let the people decide. We're going to present a highway referendum to the voters in Mississippi early next year. [inaudible] decide, first, the system, and, secondly, the method of financing. We're going to build highways, because we're going to take government away from the machine politicians and let the people have their way in state government on highways. We've heard a lot of talk about the highway patrol, and I'm the only candidate for governor that's said anything directly to the highway patrol and to state employees. Number one, there'll be no political [hacks] or political cronies appointed head of any state department when I'm governor. We'll appoint professional, well-qualified people. We want to say a word especially to the state employees of Mississippi. We believe that state government has got to give you a higher retirement income. State government has got to give you respect and dignity. State income has got to...state government has got to give you professional [inaudible]. And we've got to take each bureau and each department in state government and put professionalism in it and take politics out of it. The highway patrol is vital. It's important to the grandfathers, to the grandchildren, and to all people in all walks of life, because we, in Mississippi, are proud of our number one position...number one position in law obedience. We're first, and we want to stay that way. We'll have a merit system for the highway patrol. There'll be professionalism put in and politics taken out. And that's been my pledge for weeks in this campaign, and I state it here today for emphasis. I want to talk to you about recreation and tourism and the opportunity to enjoy our [form of life] and tourism in Mississippi. We're behind in this vital [inaudible]. I want to say this to the people of Neshoba County or Winston County or Lauderdale County or any other County. It's the fastest way to get your income up. Did you know that the Neshoba County fairground is not even on the state map? How many of you know about the Indians and the reservations and the Indian Fair? And

what has state government done to promote tourism in this section of Mississippi? While Texas has Astroworld in Houston and Six Flags Over in Dallas, Georgia has Six Flags Over, and even Arkansas has [inaudible], all we have in Mississippi is truck scales and radar traps and that's going to be...

They drive millions of miles in New Mexico to see the grave of a few Indian fighters and cowboy heroes' graves and I think that if we had [inaudible] to see where Casey Jones was killed, we could attract millions. If we had identification of this section of Mississippi in Indian history and other history, we could attract millions right into this area of the state, but we've got the stop appointing political cronies and [hacks] in the State Park Commission, and we've got to get it moving in a positive way. I pledged this throughout my campaign that I'll not promise one single job if we don't look for qualified people. The youth of Mississippi, folks. The 18 to 25 age group, and I want you to look around out here. How many young people do you see up here working hard for Bill Waller today? They're over on this side of the pavilion. We have attracted a groundswell of support from our youth. Here again, they don't want four more years of machine politics in Mississippi. They are attracted to our positive platform [for youth] [inaudible]. I told them we're going to appoint 25 and 26 year old qualified young people in state government. We going to have a youth council from all over the state, and I pledge that we'll have a member of the college community from our youth on the Board of Trustees of institutions of higher learning as an advisor, as a witness to what's going on on the campuses and this will be rotated. The young people of Mississippi are honest. They're mature. They're ambitious. They want a chance. They want a governor that really cares, and this is why they're supporting Bill Waller.

Eleven percent of your [neighbors]. Eleven percent of the people that [inaudible] with you, and they go to church with you are retired people. They want a change. They're moving to Bill Waller in vast numbers. Why? They've been excluded by the Capitol Street Gang from participation in state government. We have a positive program to use and to utilize and involve our retired citizens. We'll say to the retired citizens of Mississippi, "If you spent 30 years in the Air Force, or if you spent 35 years in government employment, or if you sold your business in Philadelphia and you retired, we want that experience in state government. We want to hear from you, because wise men get wise because they know the problem and they know the solution." And we want to have a council, and we will have, of retired citizens that [inaudible]. There won't be any worry in Mississippi in my administration lying awake at night that a retired person cannot afford adequate medical care, a retired person cannot afford convalescent care. The level of convalescent compensation in Mississippi is the lowest, and it's going to be raised, because we want to say, "If you paid taxes in Mississippi for 40 or 50 years, if you raised your children and you helped raise your

grandchildren, we love you. We want you. And Bill Waller really cares about your future, and we're going to help you, and we want you to help state government." That's my plan for retired people in Mississippi. Agriculture, the farmers in Mississippi want a change. The farmers in Mississippi are backing Bill Waller for governor in a vast majority. Why? I'm the only candidate for governor that has a modern program for agriculture, a 1971 technical and scientific approach to solving the problems in agriculture. We're saying to the farmers in Mississippi, "It's too late in Mississippi for us to keep sending cotton to South Carolina and buying the cloth back, sending [inaudible] lumber to North Carolina and buying the furniture back, sending soybeans to Chicago and buying the finished product back. It's too late in our economy and we're too far behind in our per capita income for us to continue horse and buggy practices in agriculture or in any other segment of our economy." We're going to see research come to Mississippi State University and the Extension Service to find new cash crops. We want to see the same scope of research done for manufactured products derived from agriculture. The farmer is paying more for his tractor, more for his land, and more for his fence posts, and, yet, his profit yield is getting thinner and thinner every year. Agriculture needs a shot in the arm in Mississippi. And whether you own 40 acres and work in a factory or whether you own 20 acres and are retired or whether you own 1000 acres and you're a full-time farmer, we need to look into agriculture with our present tax structure and our present capability to give the farmers an opportunity to grow and become modern under our form of government. Folks, these are the issues, some of them. We've been talking about the issues in this campaign. We have not been slinging mud. We have not been name-calling. Why? Because the people of Mississippi are concerned. They want a better future. They want a better government. They want a better opportunity [inaudible]. We don't have time to talk about our opponents, because we're talking about helping taxpayers of Mississippi. We're talking about creating government. We're talking about positive government. And I think I've been received as well as any candidate that's ever run for governor in all 82 counties. We're moving real fast. Another reason why I think Bill Waller is catching on in Mississippi is because, as I said earlier, I make no promises. There is no machine around me. Any man and woman in Mississippi, just like you in the audience today, can see Bill Waller, because you don't have to go through this group or that group on Capitol Street to see me. I'm running, running hard to return government to the people and take it away from the machine politicians.

I will make you an honest governor, and there will be no [inaudible] in my administration and no hint of improper dealings. We'll buy no vacant hotels, folks, and we'll build no 150,000 dollar fences around vacant houses. In fact, Carroll Waller and our five children will move back into that house even if the plaster is falling down.

And, after we move in, we're going to take down the pillboxes and throw away the gates on both sides so you people can come in.

We're proud people, folks. We're a great state. And we have the highest church attendance of any state based on our per capita population. We have 18 or 19 year old youths in our state looking for a chance. It's too late in Mississippi for us to talk about having four more years of what we've got now. I don't believe you want four more years of machine politics in Mississippi. I think everyone in this audience and everyone listening to me wants a change.

Tuesday will arrive real soon. Yet, we believe many of your neighbors and cousins, business associates and friends are not committed in the governor's race. It's been a quiet year. It's been an unusual year, but they are now looking at the candidates. If you're on the Bill Waller team to elect the next governor, you feel, as I do, that we want a change in Mississippi. And I need your help. I want your help. I want you to go out today and on through Monday night and talk for Bill Waller. I feel that I am going to be the next governor, because I feel a groundswell of support. I feel a warm handshake. I feel a smile. I feel like the voter cares about me, because I care about the voter. I want you to join Bill Waller, folks. I want you to get on the team and help us elect the next governor. I'll be expecting to see you in the governor's office for four years. I know what we can do together for good [inaudible] in Mississippi. Folks, join us and on Tuesday next, this time, let's really make a change. Thank you.

WINTER:

Mr. Chairman, my good friend, [inaudible], ladies and gentlemen, my fellow Mississippians and other friends. I'm delighted to be here today. I want to take advantage of this opportunity to present to you a lady that a lot of you know, of whom I'm very proud, who's been with me in this campaign and in other campaigns, my wife, Elise. I'm glad to be back at the Neshoba County Fair. I have been coming here for a long time. I have been coming here in campaign years and in non-campaign years. You have always been courteous and gracious and hospitable to me and to my family. I express my appreciation to you for that hospitality. I appreciate your invitation to come back here today. As your chairman has said to you, I come here, today, as a candidate for the office of lieutenant governor of the state of Mississippi. This is the second highest office in our state government. I hope that you will use the same standards and the same criteria in selecting the man that will serve you as lieutenant governor that you use in the selection of the man that will serve as governor of this state for the next four years. The two offices are too inseparably aligned, too close together both in terms of the responsibilities that attach to each, in terms of the potential for service in both areas. I came here four years ago as I did all over the state of Mississippi, and I asked you to elect me as the governor of this state. Many of you responded to my appeal for which I am very grateful, but I was not

elected to that office. And so, for the last four years I have been out of public life, out of politics in the state of Mississippi. I have been working as a private citizen making a living for myself, my wife and my three children. But, during that period of time, I have not lost my interest in my state, nor my desire to participate further in the public affairs of the state of Mississippi. I have lived all of my life here and, after all, everything that I have is here in Mississippi. All that I own and all that I ever expect to have or ever expect to be are irretrievably wrapped up in the welfare and the destiny and the future of this, my native state. And so, I think it is not unnatural for me to come back here in this campaign summer of 1971 and ask for your consideration and your support once again for a high public office in our state government. I submit to you that I run on the basis, not just of my desire to hold public office, not just of my desire to be in the public eye. I have had those experiences in years gone by, and none of this has any particular appeal to me. My ambition and my sole purpose for running for this office at this time is to use whatever competence and know-how that I have with respect to state government in the interest of this, my native state. I believe that the lieutenant governor's office is a worthy office to hold. And I believe that it is an office that I can hold with dignity, with ability and with the opportunity to do some things that need to be done here in the state of Mississippi. You know, we're all in this thing together. There is no one man who holds the key to the solution to the problems of this state. There is not a single individual who can do it alone. We are all involved in helping to mold and to shape and to develop the kind of state that we live in. And a part of this process lies in the development of the kind of political leadership that will help point the way in the right direction and that what will speak some facts, that will try to present some issues, that will try to avoid some of the pitfalls that will not keep us from developing into one of the great states of this country. I believe we have this potential. We have never really marshaled it. We have never really gotten on the track doing the things that need to be done here in this state that will keep our young people here that will keep our people here in positions of economic competition with the people of the other states of this union. And this is a part of a teamwork proposition that, as I say, no one man has the key to, that we have to work at together. But we cannot kid ourselves. We cannot afford the luxury, ladies and gentlemen. We cannot afford the luxury if, indeed, we ever could afford it, of having the candidates for public office come and kid you and tell you things that you know and they know they cannot perform and cannot do. The time has come, in this state, to make some hard decisions about where we want our state to go, about the kind of political leadership that we need. And I hope that I am entitled, at this point, to your serious consideration as one who, on the basis of experience in state government, on the basis of a dedication and commitment to my state, can help move this state ahead in the years to come. I want to particularly pay note here today to the number of young Mississippians who I see in front of me here. You will be voting for the first time, many of you, for the first time

in a Mississippi election. I am delighted that you will be voting, because I think that you will have raised the level of political thought in this state. And I believe that you are more willing to face up to the facts and the realities of life as we live life today. Now, some of the rest of us have been in times gone by. We must face the facts of where we are. We must live here in this state on the basis of understanding what our real potential and our real opportunities are and get on with the job of building up this state. This is the kind of commitment that I have. I have not come here today as a candidate for lieutenant governor to outline to you a long program, a long platform. I think that I have stated, prior to this year, many of the things that I would like to see achieved and accomplished in this state. I still stand for those things. I still stand, basically, on the same platform, on the same program for progress on which I ran for governor four years ago. I hope to be able to help implement some of those things as the lieutenant governor of this state. And I believe that I can. I will make you this promise that, if you will help me be elected, if you will vouch for me and support me and recommend me to your friends as a man worthy of public trust, as a man whose experience, as a man whose dedication has been proven in years gone by, that I will always remember that, as lieutenant governor of the state of Mississippi, I shall not just be representing myself alone, but that I will be representing all of you, the two...more than two million people in this state. And I shall always be mindful of the fact that whatever I say or whatever I do will be a reflection for good or ill on the people of Mississippi. And I make you this pledge. And I believe I can live up to it. I know I'll try my best to live up to it. I will never say anything or do anything as lieutenant governor of the state of Mississippi that will cause any of you to have to apologize for having William Winter as a public official of the state of Mississippi.

I want to close by expressing to you once again my appreciation for your kindness and your hospitality on this occasion and on the many other occasions that I have been privileged to be your guest. I hope that you will vote for me. I hope that you will permit me the opportunity of continuing to serve you in your state government. I shall do my very best to be worthy of your trust. Thank you so very much.

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