

We The People

A Quarterly Publication of Mississippi State University Libraries and the John C. Stennis Institute of Government Volume 1 Issue 1 2000

We The People

This newsletter will be published quarterly and is intended to provide news and information about the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service, and the Congressional and Political Research Center, Mississippi State University Libraries. In addition, we hope to have occasional guest columns by well-known individuals who have had, or are having, successful public service/government careers, or by individuals in related occupations, such as political columnists and/or commentators. We welcome suggestions and ideas for future editions.



Mississippi State
UNIVERSITY

Legacy of Leadership

The Successful Beginning of a Joint Partnership

The John C. Stennis Center for Public Service, the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, and the Mississippi State University Libraries, under the auspices of the Libraries' newly created Congressional and Political Research Center, jointly organized and sponsored a symposium on the MSU campus, November 11-12, 1999, entitled "Legacy of Leadership: Mississippians on Capitol Hill." The symposium, held in conjunction with the tenth anniversary of the Stennis Center and the creation of the Research Center, was designed to explore the legacy

of Mississippians who have served and are serving in the United States Congress.

Featured speakers included current Mississippi Senator Trent Lott and current Mississippi Congressman Chip Pickering, former congressmen G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery and David Bowen, former Mississippi Governor William Winter, former chief of staff to and confidant of Senator Stennis, Eph Cresswell, and veteran Mississippi newspaper columnists Bill Minor and Sid Salter.

The symposium began Thursday morning, November 11, with welcomes by Stennis Center Director Rex Buffington, Pickering, and MSU President Malcolm Portera, and a keynote address by Winter, who skillfully traced the careers of Mississippians in Congress, beginning with those elected after the Civil War. A panel discussion followed, mod-

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erated by Stennis Institute Director Marty Wiseman and included Winter, Minor and Cresswell discussing the famous 1947 senatorial campaign of Stennis. Senator Lott discussed his rise to power and his personal political philosophy before a large audience Thursday afternoon. Thursday night, a packed house attended a dinner and program, moderated by Buffington, that celebrated Senator Stennis' career and legacy, reviewed the history of the Stennis Center, and featured presentations on congressional leadership by Montgomery, Bowen and Pickering.

On Friday morning, November 12, Buffington presided at the official establishment of the Research Center and the

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The Partners

John C. Stennis Center for Public Service

The Stennis Center for Public Service was established by the U. S. Congress in 1988 to promote and strengthen public service in America and to carry on the commitment to public service exemplified by the life and work of John C. Stennis. The Center's mission is to attract young people to public service careers, to improve leadership in public service through various programs conducted throughout the country, and to equip Congressional staff to perform their duties more effectively and efficiently. The Center is located in the Mississippi Research and Technology Park on Highway 82 East in Starkville, Mississippi, just north of the Mississippi State University campus. For information contact **Rex Buffington**, Executive Director, or **Brother Rogers**, Assistant Director, at 662-325-8409.

John C. Stennis Institute of Government

The John C. Stennis Institute of Government, located in the Depot Building on the Mississippi State University campus, was created in 1976 as a service and research arm of Mississippi State University. The Stennis Institute performs a

threefold mission: (1) to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Mississippi state and local governments through basic and applied research, training, technical assistance, and service; (2) to provide technical assistance and research for both rural development in Mississippi and regional activities in the Southeast; and (3) to promote civic education and citizen involvement in the political process. For information, contact **Dr. Marty Wiseman**, Director, at 662-325-3328.

Congressional and Political Research Center, Mississippi State University Libraries

The Research Center, created November 12, 1999, and located in the Mitchell Memorial Library, contains the core congressional collections of Senator John C. Stennis, congressmen G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery, David Bowen, Charles Griffin, Chip Pickering, and Mike Espy, and the collections of congressional aides Wiley Carter, assistant to Senator Thad Cochran, and Wayne Weidie, chief of staff to Congressman Gene Taylor. The Center serves as a repository where patrons may examine materials that cover a broad range of historically significant

events and issues and provides informational links via the Internet to other pertinent sources. For information about the Center, call **Frances Coleman**, Dean of Libraries, at 662-325-7661; for information on research access to collections call **Dr. Michael Ballard**, Congressional Collection Coordinator, at 662-325-7680.

Beginning (continued)

opening of the Stennis Collection. Pickering, Library Dean Frances N. Coleman, Congressional Collection Coordinator Michael Ballard, Wiseman, and Salter made brief remarks. President Portera then announced the creation of the Research Center and the opening of the Stennis Collection.

The "Legacy of Leadership" program proved to be a successful beginning to a projected series of programs on various aspects of public service, congressional history, and various aspects of local, state, regional, national and inter-

national issues and developments: past, present and future. These programs will continue to be co-sponsored by the Stennis Center, Stennis Institute, and the MSU Libraries via the Research Center.



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We The People is designed and published for the faculty, staff, and students of Mississippi State University, and the general public, by the Instructional Media Center, Mississippi State University Libraries. It is a quarterly publication. Editorial material should be sent to Michael Ballard, Congressional Collection Coordinator, P.O. Box 5408, Mississippi State, MS, 39762, or at mballard@library.msstate.edu. Phone: 662-325-7680

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Photo Gallery



Mississippi Third District Congressman Chip Pickering speaking at the ceremonies establishing the Congressional and Political Research Center.



Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, Mississippi State University President Malcolm Portera and Senator Trent Lott at the Legacy of Leadership ceremonies.



Mississippi columnist Sid Salter speaking at the ceremonies establishing the Congressional and Political Research Center.

Stennis Institute Project

In November of this past year the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service, and the Mississippi State University Libraries organized and sponsored the "Legacy of Leadership: Mississippians on Capitol Hill." One part of this program was the official opening of the Stennis Collection.

The Stennis Institute, under the leadership of Dr. Marty Wiseman, Director, took on the responsibility of choosing areas of interest in the Stennis papers and providing brief summaries on these subjects. The issues chosen for research were Cuba, Civil Rights, and the Space Program. The summaries were made available to the public at the official openings of the Research Center and the Stennis Collection at the Mitchell Memorial Library.

In each summary, information was provided on Stennis' role in the particular issue. On the subject of Cuba, a press release issued by Stennis in April of 1961 was uncovered, which signaled Stennis' concern that Cuba posed a threat to American national security. In Civil Rights, it became very clear that Stennis' stance on segregation was based on his strict interpretation of the United States Constitution. The papers dealing with the Space Program showed the extent to which Stennis played a role in Mississippi acquiring a NASA facility.

The intention of preparing these brief overviews was to create and sustain an interest in the Stennis Collection. If the reaction to the entire program is any indication, then the goal of preparing the issue summaries will be met. If anybody would like a copy of the Stennis paper summaries, please contact Stephen Williams at 662-325-9480.