

strength is most needed and most appreciated. We know that our President is today facing some of the most momentous decisions in the history of our great nation. And I know that he, as did the late President Kennedy, and in fact all of our great presidents before him, turn to God for guidance in the hours of decision.

It was suggested that I speak today on "what concerned churchmen ought to know about practical political processes." I know that your seminar is concentrating this year on the subject of political processes so that you can develop more effective political concern within your individual local churches. This is certainly a most worthy endeavor and I am happy to add what I can to your information on this subject. Although after more than 30 years in politics, I sometimes feel that I do not really know a great deal more about this fascinating subject than when I first started.

One of the most fundamental things which I have learned over these many years, however, is that the political figure, be he candidate or incumbent, who does not follow the wishes of and act in the best interests of his constituency, will not be successful to any great degree. Every politician, and I proudly use that term which has re-acquired in recent years its rightful good connotation, tries to know what his constituency, wants him to do and how they feel about the various issues on which he has to vote. It is in this area particularly that I feel that you and your congregations can be most effective.

As churchmen, I know that you do not become involved in advocating either of the two major parties or their candidates. You can, however, and I strongly recommend that you do, urge and lead your congregations in political awareness. You should urge all of the members of your various churches to register to vote. This is most important. You would be amazed at the number of Americans who do not take advantage of this great privilege which so many have given their lives to insure. This is step one. I might say, of course, that I would hope that you would urge them to do the only right thing and register as Democrats. But seriously, this is most important, that each person study the records and philosophies of the two major parties and register according to that which most fits his own personal beliefs.

Voting is the next important step. And again I point out that there are an almost unbelievable number of Americans who, once registered, fail to exercise this great right on election day, whether it be the primary or general election. And here again you can emphasize the importance of voting in the primary election as well as in the general