

Talking Points for NRA Meeting
September ~~19~~, 1985
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I. S.49 McClure Gun bill

1. At long last The Senate on July 9, by a vote of 79-15, approved S.49
2. Just as sweet was the vote on the Kennedy Handgun amendment-69-25
3. Even the 71-23 vote on the Inouye waiting period amendment (which closely resembled an amendment in Judiciary Committee in 1982 offered by a certain Senator who since saw the folly of his ways) was equally an impressive victory.
4. I salute your organization. It was a long, hard fought battle.

The NRA has come of age--truly a force to be reckoned with in Washington. More important it is a national grass roots organization some 3 million strong with the political know-how and the dedication to stick it out when the going gets tough.

5. Let's highlight some of the factors that accounted for this victory:
 - a. You have a small group of pros who know the business here- I want to acknowledge their contributions by name:
Ray Arnett--new on the job, but a "quick learn"

Wayne LaPierre and Jim Baker of your Institute of Legislative Affairs- they worked day-by-day with my staff and me to get S.49 moving this year.

Their predictions of the outcome of key votes proved to be very accurate. This is almost unique for lobbyists who usually wear rose colored glasses when it comes to these matters.

Tom Korologos the consummate Washington pro who was available when we needed him to handle some very delicate matters of Senator-to-Senator relationships.
 - b. I should also mention the leadership and hard work of Orrin Hatch and his staffer Randy Rader. They really made major contributions in Committee and on the floor.
 - c. Of course, tribute also goes to the author of the bill Jim McClure for his long term commitment.
 - d. With some immodesty I would also suggest that there was Senate leadership who thought S.49's time had come.

We also thought it might be possible to get the opposition

to agree to limit debate and avoid a filibuster without compromising on key matters and selling our souls.

- e. There were some difficulties. At times it was difficult to distinguish friends from enemies in getting a time agreement hammered out. This could have meant disaster except for the good work done by the people mentioned above.

II. House action

1. As sweet as the Senate victory is, it is only a victory. The war is far from over.
2. I understand that the strategy is now being developed to get favorable action by the House. We in the Senate will watch with keen interest. We will be patient--up to a point. If the House fails to act after a reasonable time, then the Senate has other options available to it--such as a Senate floor amendment to House-passed "must" legislation. It is essential that we keep the channels of communication open to get the job done.

The 1986 Elections

-As the Majority Leader, my priority concern about the 1986 elections is obviously to keep the Senate under Republican control. But 1986 is important for this organization too -- for it will provide you with your first major opportunity after S. 49's passage to demonstrate that support for the positions of the NRA's membership can translate into support at the polls.

-And many Senate Republicans up for reelection in 1986 worked hard for you to get S. 49 passed. People like Senators Hawkins, Symms, and Abdnor were active in the floor debate. I might also add that our entire freshman class of '86 was with you on virtually every vote. And I can't resist mentioning that of the handful of Senators who voted against the bill on final passage, a significant number were Democrats from states which the Republicans have a shot at winning in 1986.

-You are a nonpartisan organization -- your members cast their votes on the basis of the candidates' stands on the issues, not their political affiliation. On the other hand, I invite you to take a look at the vote tallies on each of the amendments to S. 49 and final passage -- ask yourself whether you would be in a better position if the Democrats or the Republicans were in control of the Senate in 1987.

-The fact of the matter is, if the NRA mobilizes and its members vote on the basis of the issues, Republicans will benefit. So encourage them to vote for the candidate who represents the interests of the sportsmen, hunter, and gun collector and in states like Colorado, California, and Florida, you'll help us win.