

Speech of John E. Fogarty seconding the nomination of Robert E. Quinn for U. S. Senator, at the Democratic State Convention held at Elks Auditorium, Wednesday, September 11, 1946.

I know there are a great many conflicting thoughts running through the minds of you ladies and gentlemen who are the delegates to this Democratic Convention. I know there are strong emotions which are surging through the hearts of all democrats assembled here.

I am certain - as I was never more certain of anything - that all of us desire to present to the voters this fall the strongest possible ticket that our party can offer. We are anxious to ask the voters of the State of Rhode Island to give their consideration to the best possible individuals - under the banner of the Democratic Party.

It is because I am certain that is the wish of every delegate to this convention that I am here before you to second the nomination of Fighting Bob Quinn.

Ambition is a natural thing. It is a force which all fathers strive to encourage in their boys. It is natural that we find - among many men - an ambition to rise to higher places in their state and nation. In our party - we welcome the ambitious. Every man and every woman - in our Party - has the absolute right to strive for any post he or she is qualified to fill. And no man possesses the right - or should display the temerity - to attempt to discourage or thwart - that sort of ambition.

But ambition alone is not enough. In addition to our natural desire to see our party succeed at the polls - as instruments of our democratic form of government - we have a most profound obligation to all the people of our State. We ask them for their support at the polls. We MUST offer to them candidates who possess - as well as ambition - the ability - and the will-

ingness - to serve the people - in the offices to which they shall be elected.

If I did not believe - with all my heart - that Bob Quinn possesses those characteristics - in full measure - I would not have the effrontery to ask you to nominate him for the high position which we seek for him.

The recent war left us a great many headaches. Some of the problems which our country must solve can well be described as monumental. There are conflicting ideologies vying for favor - all over the world. There is all sorts of evidence of greed and selfishness here in our own land - which interferes with the orderly reconversion of our economy from war to peace. The Republican Party stalwarts - with their blind course of obstruction - have made the problems - at once more acute and more difficult to solve.

It is with this sort of condition that our next Senator from Rhode Island must cope. Many of these problems will not lend themselves to compromise - and I can assure you Fighting Bob Quinn is no compromiser.

During this coming campaign - and during the following six years Rhode Island will need in the Senate of the United States of America a man who has demonstrated his willingness - yes his determination - to hew to the line and let the chips fall where they may. Bob Quinn is your man.

There have been other conventions called by the Democratic Party in Rhode Island. There have been conventions when many felt they were just going through the motions - because an apathetic public - or a vicious state returning board - would set all our efforts at naught when election day rolled around. In those days - you old-timers will recall vividly - it was sometimes hard to muster a Corporal's guard to stand fast under the banner of Democracy. There was little hope in those dark days of our Party's life - and the faithful

were few. But recall - if you will - that among the names that shine most brilliantly - when the old party's roll is called - is the name of Robert Emmet Quinn - the young Senator from West Warwick.

The young Senator who fought - tooth and nail - in the Senate of the State of Rhode Island - to keep alive the fire of faith in the democratic cause. In campaigns that were fought from the back seats of old cars and wagons - in poorly lighted halls - and in back lots - in the days when the party couldn't raise a quarter for hall rent or advertising - there, in every hamlet and ward from one end of the state to the other - was fighting Bob Quinn - not preaching platitudes - but battling every inch of the way for justice - for principle - for the common good - and no man - I say this my friends most sincerely - no man in this state contributed more to the ultimate victory which was ours - than did little Robert Emmet Quinn.

Remember - such expressions as Direct Primary - the Right of Recall - Initiative and Referendum? The man who made them famous in Rhode Island was that same Bob Quinn.

Recall the fight for abolition of Property Qualification - the fight for permanent registration?

Remember the fight for reorganization of our State Government - the abolition of Boards and Commissions? With every recollection of those issues in our party's never-ending fight for better government in this little state - you have felt in your hearts a touch of affection for the little man who fought for them - and whose name is still indelibly identified with them.

Remember do you our Party's victory at the polls - and all the good things that flowed from that victory? There followed a period unique in the history of our state. Good legislation went on the books - Labor in Rhode

Island raised its head and came into the open. Humanitarian legislation was forced out of the stultifying atmosphere of a Decadent Senate. Our State Government was reorganized and the Government of our State came back to the people where it rightfully belonged. When you recall those things - remember who had the intestinal fortitude - the unwavering courage - the fighting heart that made it all possible. And remember too, my friends - there are a lot of us here today - and that goes for myself - who would not have had such a choice taste of the fruits of our party's first victory - had it not been for the unalterable determination of Fighting Bob Quinn who stood on the rostrum facing a violently bitter and hateful Republican Senate.

Have I elaborated? No, I have not. You know I haven't told half the story.

Am I moved by my affection for Bob in making this appeal to you? Yes, I am - and I would be a coward were I to pretend any different. But, let me say this - I would have the same affection for any man who has fought so loyally and so well for this Party whose banner I follow.

Affection I have - yes, almost akin to love - for the man who has borne the toil of the battle in the days when it seemed hopeless; who fought against overwhelming odds - and who almost alone - and you know it as well as I do - made possible the pleasure and satisfaction which many of us have enjoyed since.

Is that man not worthy to wear the party's toga now?

Is that man not worthy of his party's confidence at this time?

Our Party needs him - our State needs him - our Country needs him.

I wish I possessed the skill of a learned advocate. I would draw for you a picture. It would be a scene on the Floor of the United States Senate. There would be - standing in the midst of some of the world's most powerful and zealous reactionaries - a little Irishman - pleading the cause

of the working men and women of the country - he would be Bob Quinn - once again in the familiar arena - once again fighting the good fight for justice for every American - supporting the principles without which our party will wither and die.

And let me assure you Bob Quinn will never compromise with those principles.

Ladies and Gentlemen - the future is not easy. To weather the storms which face the state and the Nation we need a man of Bob's fighting ability.

I am not seeking merely honor for Bob Quinn. I am seeking victory for our Party - and the best possible representation for the people of our State.

I am not seeking a reward - a job if you will - for myself. I expect to have the honor, once again, to run on the same ticket with Bob Quinn.

I want to win. I want every Democrat on the ticket - in every city and town in this state to win.

That's why I want the best. The people of our State deserve the best.

That's why I appeal to you to support the candidacy of Bob Quinn.

He will help bring victory to our banner in November. And he will establish such a record in the United States Senate - that our task in 1948 will be an easy one.

With genuine pride I second the nomination of Robert Emmet Quinn to be our Party's candidate for the United States Senate.