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5833 – States Rights Trends in the U.S.

Guests: Rep. Frank Boykin (D-AL) and Rep. L. Mendel Rivers (D-SC)

Morphew: Introductions...to Boykin...any developments that indicate a trend back to states rights?

Boykin: Yes, not so much in Congress but in all of our southern states. Certainly you can tell that by the people that's just been elected governor. I spent the last weekend with my Mendel Rivers and a states righter down there has just been elected, a ripe, young man, by over 60,000 majority. We have the same thing down in Alabama, states righters, John Patterson, he's just been elected. He had, I think, 6 or 7 opponents. He beat them all and he's certainly a states righter. Then Howard Smith's bill which both Congressman Rivers and practically all of us in our part of the country, and you take Faubus, that shows you we back the states rights if anything ever did show us, that's the best answer I know. I talked to him at 2:00 yesterday morning and he carried every county in the state with everybody with the NAACP and all those kind of left-wing organizations working against him and with this Negro from Montgomery, King, down there working against him and everybody else. That shows how the people feel about states rights. They want states rights and they don't want to be interfered with by the Supreme Court or this attorney general up here or anybody else.

Morphew: Rivers?

Rivers: Dick, the program of the left wingers and the NAACP is to destroy state sovereignty. They know that by destroying state sovereignty and wiping out the states as entities that the centralized government can impose their will on any part of the country. Now the program is against the ????. When Eisenhower called out the army against every concept of law and completely an illegal act on the part of the president down in Little Rock, Arkansas, he congealed the thinking and solidified the opposition to that type of

government and I think that's one reason that Faubus got such a terrific vote. The people resent quartering of troops on them and martial law against their will. Now, you talk about in the Congress, Congressman Smith's bill, H.R. 3, which reasserted the age old concept in the law that unless there is an irreconcilable conflict between the state and the federal government, the federal government does not preempt any field in which a state may act, notably in the case of H.R. 3 was a subversive case, a subversive law, the Steve Nelson case. As you remember, the state of Pennsylvania enacted a subversive law, Steve Nelson, a communist labor leader, was convicted, and the Supreme Court that held that being that the federal government had a law for subversive activities or sedition that states couldn't enact a law in that field, which of course was ridiculous. The Supreme Court in its present make-up is against states rights and against the states as entities. They have been brainwashed. Everybody knows certain members of the Court have been brainwashed and against us. But when we passed that bill the other day, H.R. 3, reestablishing the states as entities to enact laws which are not an irreconcilable conflict with the acts of the Congress, they reinstated the concept of states rights. Now I think, there are a number of things, they have a bill over in the Senate which, known as the Jenner Bill, which restricts the Supreme Court in certain appellate cases, restricts its appellate capacity. I think there's an upswing in this country towards states rights. As my dear friend, Frank Boykin has said, the elections in the South indicated that the South is now ready to reject anybody, anybody, who's for the centralized form of government, and I predict, Dick, I predict when the next convention of Democrats is held, wherever it may be held, I assume it'll either be in Chicago or Philadelphia or somewhere in the East, they better watch out because the South is ready for revolt and I'm not certain more than 4 southern states will go this time like in 1948. I don't know who'll lead it but a lot of people are looking to want Orval Faubus. I don't know what the future will bring. I don't know whether he's interested, but I'll say to you that the southern people are looking for a leader to lead us away from this ilk of Reuther, of Williams in Michigan, Sophie Williams, I'm trying to say, and others of that, James Roosevelt and Humphreys of Minnesota and the rest of them who want to lead us down the one road to the point of no return which is destined to destroy the South as we know it, integrate its traditions, and abolish us forever as separate entities. The South just isn't going to take it. And in 1958, 1960 and in the days to come, you watch the South, Dick, you come from there, you know what the people are thinking.

Boykin: Dick, you have a man down right where you come from that's doing as much good as any living man in the world, Bill Colmer of Pascagoula, Mississippi, where you have that great shipyard, and you take John Bell Williams up there in Hattiesburg, what a great governor he would make, and you take your two great Mississippi senators and all of that delegation, they're all just working as hard as they can, and in my judgment, Mendel Rivers, this part of the twentieth, the last part of the twentieth century, belongs to the South. We are really getting our god-given rights. Our natural resources are being developed and our human resources and you can't beat them, just take the crowd, and the only trouble is there are not enough of us, Congressman Rivers.

Rivers: Let me just say, under the leadership of Bill Colmer and Jim Eastland and John Bell Williams and Howard Smith and the rest of these great southerners, the South has a

great standing in the Congress and they reflect the feeling of the people back home and we are glad that they are leading us. God knows, I hope they stay in this Congress a thousand years.

Boykin: Mendel, they ought to change Jim Eastland's name and take that 'east' out. They ought to name him, Mr. South, because he's done so much for the South and that whole group's doing it. We're working together and I believe God and man are both with us. And don't you think that those northerners are not getting their fill of it. I go to New York pretty regular and I know what I'm talking about. They don't know what to do, they just want us to help them. And they're finding out some things. What they wanted us to do was to tell us how to do. Now they've got so many of these things that we had and now they are going to find out about it.

Rivers: Let me say this, the freest man on earth is a free Yankee. When these Yankees get south of the mason and dixon line, they sure are free and they sure are happy. And if we could get more of these Yankees down south, we'd have no trouble. The best senators on earth are converted Yankees. We've brainwashed a million of them, and they make wonderful southerners. And when we get them down there where they can say what they want to say and have their god-given right of free speech, they really help us and make good states righters. And I think the greatest thing for the South is that we haven't passed a law prohibiting the Yankees from coming South, because once they get there they never want to go back. They're tired of this integration in the North.

Boykin: I want to tell you just what happened. Not only are the men from the West and the East and the North coming South, the greatest part of this universe, but we are getting so many people. Mendel Rivers just had a fight and won it for that great border bill down in South Carolina and in Tennessee and North Carolina. We had a great fight, but there are some great people that came here and spent 80 million dollars. Just think of it here. We have the great Cotalls ??? company down there, have the largest rayon plant in the world at Mobile, Alabama. We have a Starkville Chemical company (?), we have the Olan-Mathiston company (???), we have the Geiger (???) people that invented DDT.

Rivers: And they got to be protected by state laws.

Boykin: Yes sir. They have and they love it and they are a great help to us and we couldn't get along without them and I wouldn't take anything for them and I wouldn't take anything for your great Mississippi delegation. They're a great group of men. You take Tom Abernathy who's working so hard on the Tennessee-Tombigbee. We've just had, Mendel and I today, we had General Wilson of the army engineers and the resident engineer for Mobile working on that great project that means so much to Mississippi and the entire South. It means more than anything else. It means the port of Mobile where we are now in 6th place would be larger than New Orleans when the Tennessee-Tombigbee company comes.

Rivers: Let me say this, Frank, that's true, but now Dick wants to know what can we do. Let's say to our people back home, those who may hear this program, you register, you

get your name on the roles, you take the leadership, you who believe in states rights because if you sit quietly by, your god-given right will be taken from you, but if you get your influence felt by force of numbers, register, let's take over our southland and let's head it in the right direction because there are them among us who would steer us on another course under the guise of expediency. Don't let that happen to us because with your backing we in the Congress are only as strong as you are. Keep us strong by keeping control of our elections back home and the political machinery that withhold your rights. Protect your rights and sustain men like Jim Eastland, Frank Boykin, John Bell Williams, and that legion of southerners who are fighting that battle for you. And may I say, don't forget Sam Irvin of North Carolina, Strom Thurmond and the rest of these boys who are fighting your fight because without them, you'd have none.

Boykin: And don't forget Congressman Mendel Rivers from Charleston, there. I've got a kind of home down there and he has done a great work down there. They're the finest folks in the world. And then we have another thing Congressman Rivers that's just happened here. This wonderful redheaded boy from Oklahoma, 31 years old, won by over 200,000 votes and he's a states righter. His brother's right here in the Congress, what's his name? Mendel?

Rivers: His name is Evanston but I want to see and I want to talk with him. I don't know what he is.

Boykin: He's alright.

Rivers: I know what these boys are whom I've mentioned. And I'm sure of my governor Fritz Hollis and your governor Patterson and the rest of them. If that boy in Oklahoma's with us we welcome him. We welcome anybody who's going our way. Anybody who's going our way.

Boykin: He's already gone, brother, he's already gone.