

# **Bartlett: Most Difficult Statement I Ever Made**

Sen. E.L. (Bob) Bartlett in what he termed his most difficult statement he has made since he has been in public, severely criticized his old colleague, Sen. Ernest Gruening.

Gruening has recently announced that he will run as a write-in candidate even though he was beaten for nomination in the primary election by Mike Gravel.

In making his statement, Sen. Bartlett said he will support Mike Gravel saying that the voters had spoken in favor of Gravel.

"The voters spoke," stated Bartlett. "I intend to honor the choice of the people. For me to do otherwise would be an act of arrogance subject to deserved criticism.

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# Difficult Statement . . .

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"I cannot in good conscience contribute to further division among the people, particularly at a time when our election process is being sorely challenged, by those who advocate change by force."

The following is Sen. Bartlett's statement in full:

"This is a statement of conscience.

"The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in times of crisis are silent.' This was a quotation from Dante that Senator Ernest Gruening used in announcing his candidacy for the United States Senate. I shall be guided by that admonition. I shall not remain silent.

"This is the most difficult statement I have made since I have been in public life.

"It is so because it bears upon the political aspirations of Ernest Gruening, with whom I have had close association since he became Territorial Governor of Alaska in 1939.

"It is so because in this time of change and turmoil, differences among our people are deep and emotional commitments are strong.

"It is because of these differences that I must speak out, for if we are to survive as a free nation, if we are to correct the serious injustices which exist in our society, I believe and believe strongly that we must do it through the participation of our people in the election process.

"In times such as these we perhaps are least inclined to draw upon the lessons of the past, but I point out to you that the Democratic Party has a position of primacy in bringing about needed social and economic changes, and in carrying out the people's will, and in remolding itself to meet changing times.

"On August 27, Alaskans, in the primary election chose Mike Gravel as the Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate over Ernest Gruening.

"The voters spoke. I intend to honor the choice of the people. For me to do otherwise would be an act of arrogance subject to deserved criticism.

"I cannot in good conscience contribute to further division among the people, particularly at a time when our election process is being sorely challenged, by those who advocate change by force.

"I have put personal considerations aside in this decision. The time comes when a man must speak out. I speak out now.

"In his announcement of candidacy, Senator Gruening closed with these words 'Let us not remain neutral.' He is right. We should not. We cannot. I support the Democratic majority. I support Mike Gravel, chosen by the people. I am confident that he has the qualifications to become an outstanding U.S. Senator."