

Political Philosophy



Americans wait in a breadline in order to receive food during the Depression
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, FSA-OWI Collection

Tom Murphy developed a political philosophy in his early years that would guide him for the rest of his life. One profound influence on Murphy was the Great Depression of the 1930s. While his father's job prevented the Murphy family from going hungry during these years, as a boy in Bremen he saw many individuals who suffered greatly.

"I remember... good people coming up to your back door, knocking on the door and wanting to know if they could cut wood or do anything just for a hot meal."

- Tom Murphy



President and Mrs. Roosevelt during a visit to Georgia
Courtesy of Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia

Murphy deeply admired Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose "New Deal" government programs provided support to many hard-hit Americans. Much more personally, Murphy was affected by the disability of his beloved older brother James, who suffered from rheumatoid arthritis. In his early years as an attorney, Murphy often carried his wheelchair-bound brother up the back stairs of the Buchanan Courthouse.

As a result of such experiences, Murphy remained committed throughout his career to providing government support to those who could not help themselves. "Everybody knows I'm an ultra-conservative on fiscal matters," he once remarked. "But when it comes to old folks, little children, and the mentally ill, I am a bleeding heart liberal and I don't care who knows it. There are still folks we have to look after and I've always tried to do that."



Murphy plowing on family land
Courtesy of the Murphy Family



Murphy with his father and brothers
Courtesy of the Murphy Family



Coweta Times-Herald, May 25, 1999