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order to protect our property and the work of our esteemed composers.

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# THE SENATOR'S STUMP SPEECH





#### **PROGRAM NOTES**

The text is by Noah "Soggy" Sweat, a judge and member of the Mississippi legislature who uttered these great words in a speech in 1952. My compliments to him. I also wish to thank my good friend Bill Powers who brought this text to my attention and suggested I set it to music. I hope this short piece will find its way onto recitals of "serious" music as either an unexpected relief from the formal or just a rollicking good encore.

-Steven Mark Kohn, 2006

#### **AVAILABLE EDITIONS**

Low Voice and Piano 8674 High Voice and Piano 8675

#### **TEXT**

Senator: (Quieting applause from previous piece)

Thank you! Thank you very much!

It is my distinct pleasure to be here today with all of you fine people.

Audience member #1 (or Pianist): (Cutting him off)

Excuse me, Senator! What is your position on whiskey?

Audience member #2:

Yeah! Where do you stand on whiskey?

Audience member #3 (or Pianist):

Yeah, what about it Senator?

(all three ad lib.)

Senator: (Quieting them)

Now, now now, my good people!

I had not intended to discuss this controversial subject at this particular time.

However, I want you to know that I do not shun controversy.

On the contrary, I will discuss any subject at any time, regardless of how fraught with controversy it may be.

You have asked me how I feel about whiskey. All right, here is how I feel about whiskey...

If when you say whiskey you mean the Devil's brew, the poison scourge, the bloody monster that defiles innocence, dethrones reason, destroys the home, creates misery and poverty, yea, literally takes the bread from the mouths of little children;

if when you say whiskey you mean that evil drink that topples Christian men and women from the pinnacle of gracious, righteous living into the bottomless pit of degradation, and despair, and shame, and helplessness, and hopelessness, then I am against it.

But,

If when you say whiskey you mean the oil of conversation, the philosophic wine, the ale that is consumed when good fellows get together,

that puts a song on their lips and laughter in their hearts, and the warm glow of contentment in their eyes;

if you mean Christmassy cheer; if you mean the stimulating drink that puts the spring into some old gentleman's step on a frosty, crispy morning; if you mean the drink which enables man to magnify his joy, his happiness,

his pleasure, and his love of life, and to forget, if only for a little while, life's great tragedies; if you mean the drink the sale of which pours into our treasuries untold millions of dollars, which are used to provide tender care for our little crippled children, our blind, our deaf, our pitiful aged and infirm; to build roads and hospitals and schools, then certainly I am for it.

This is my stand, I will not be swayed from it. I will not detract from it. I will not compromise.

Thank you very much.

Noah "Soggy" Sweat (1922–1996)

\*\*Adapted by Steven Mark Kohn

Words: Whiskey Speech, by Noah Spurgeon Sweat, Jr.

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Catalog No. 8675 5

for Bill Powers

## The Senator's Stump Speech

### for High Voice and Piano

Text Attributed to Noah "Soggy" Sweat (1922–1996) Adapted by Steven Mark Kohn Steven Mark Kohn

**Senator**: (Quieting applause from previous piece) Thank you! Thank you very much! It is my distinct pleasure to be here today with all of you fine people.

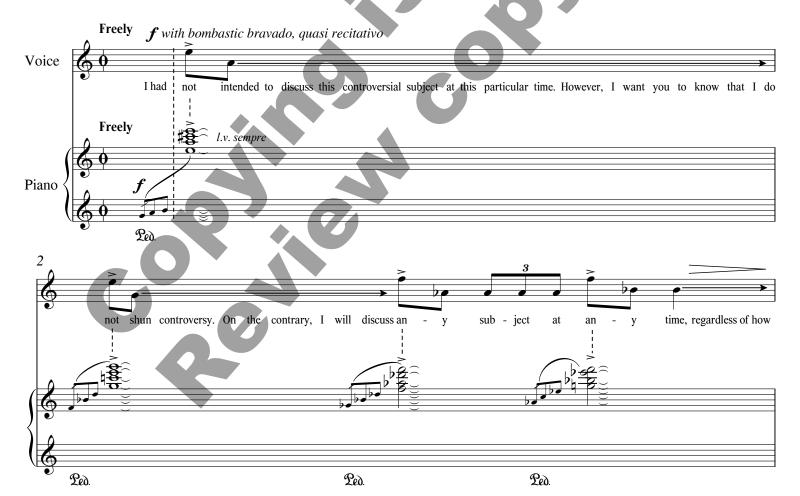
Audience member #1 (or Pianist): (Cutting him off) Excuse me, Senator! What is your position on whiskey?

Audience member #2: Yeah! Where do you stand on whiskey?

Audience member #3 (or Pianist): Yeah, what about it Senator?

(all three ad lib.)

Senator: (Quieting them) Now, now now, my good people!



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