

speak of what is not important or relevant; how to insist on your own position without offending; how to create the kind of friendly atmosphere that makes complex negotiations easier; how to keep a conversation going without prying or without being aloof; how to balance serious political themes with lighter, more relaxing topics; how to plan your official journeys judiciously and to know when it is more appropriate not to go someplace; when to be open and when reticent and to what degree. But more than that it means having a certain instinct for the time, the atmosphere of the time, the mood of people, the nature of their worries, their frame of mind. That, too, can perhaps be more useful than sociological surveys. An education in political science, law, economics, history and culture is an invaluable asset to any politician, but I have been persuaded again and again that it is not the most essential element. Qualities like fellow feeling, the ability to talk to others, insight, the capacity to grasp quickly not only problems, but also human character, the ability to make contact, a sense of moderation, all of these are immensely more important in politics. I am not saying, heaven forbid, that I, myself, am endowed with these qualities, not at all, only Senator Chambers is. (Laughter) To sum up, if your heart is in the right place and you have good taste, good judgment that is, not only will you pass muster in politics, but you are destined for it. If you are modest and do not lust after power, not only are you suited to politics, you absolutely belong there. The sine qua non of a politician is not the ability to lie; he need only be sensitive and know when, what, to whom, and how to say what he has to say. It is not true that a person of principle does not belong in politics. It is enough for his principles to be leavened with patience, deliberation, a sense of proportion and an understanding of others. It is not true that only the unfeeling cynic, the vain, the brash and the vulgar can succeed in politics. Such people, it is true, are drawn to politics, but in the end decorum and good judgment will always count for more. And so you say what has any of this to do with a half cent sales tax. And I read this to you, I guess, because if I cannot shake you out of the mood that you're in, there will be no votes for this. And the mood that you're in has to do with convoluted game of anticipating what certain petitions out there mean, and who might sign them, and what might be done, and how we're going to manipulate the people into not signing those petitions, and going along with this package which we will bet all our marbles we can straighten out in the next two years.