



Down South

MSNBC – Dionne Scott – 10/28/03

On Monday, Lieberman returned to New Hampshire for the first time after deciding to skip the Iowa caucuses. He traveled the Granite State once again in the WinnebaJoe, hitting three events, including a Rotary Club meeting, an "Every Child Matters" forum and a political guest series at St. Anselm's College. At Anselm's, Lieberman got a question that threw him for a little loop. Independent voter Bob Jean told the senator he wanted to dig a little deeper than the typical stump speech, "We need to know a little bit more about your strengths and weaknesses. So what I'd like to know is when you review your whole life, what is the most, the biggest success in your life? And also what is the biggest failure in your life? And how learning from each of those, how will that make you a better president?" At first it seemed like Lieberman might give some personal insight, acknowledging that Jean was "asking difficult, but important questions that really go to the heart of how, I believe, people make a judgement about who to support." Then he launched into his bio — the grandchild of immigrants, born into a hardworking and religious family, the first child to attend college, etc. — before saying, "Let's see if I want to answer some of your personal questions." It turned out that he didn't, instead he predicted how the world may change for the worse if Bush stays in office, then wrapped up saying, "the personal stuff is real personal." Afterwards, Jean said the exchange didn't turn him off or away from Lieberman, but he did say it makes a difference. "He's not really very open personally. He didn't show any self-introspection at all. Like if you ask McCain what his successes or failures are, he'd give you a whole list. You know, that endears people to him. I think that makes it hard when he can't give of himself a little bit more."