

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 1980

"FELLOW CITIZENS, WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY. THE FIERY TRIAL THROUGH WHICH WE PASS WILL LIGHT US DOWN IN HONOR -- OR DISHONOR -- TO THE LATER GENERATION. WE, EVEN WE HERE, HOLD THE POWER AND BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY."

THE WORDS ARE ESSENTIALLY OLD AND BELONG TO ABRAHAM LINCOLN, SPIRITUAL FATHER OF OUR PARTY, BUT THEIR CALL TO GREATNESS IS UNIVERSAL AND TIMELESS, THE PROPERTY OF NO SINGLE PARTY OR CANDIDATE.

LISTEN TO THE LINCOLN MUSIC, MY FELLOW REPUBLICANS: "THE OCCASION IS PILED HIGH WITH DIFFICULTY, AND WE MUST RISE WITH THE OCCASION. WE MUST DISENTHRAL OURSELVES -- AND THEN WE SHALL SAVE OUR COUNTRY."

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WE SAVED OUR COUNTRY A CENTURY AGO, AND IN 1980, WE ARE CALLED UPON TO SAVE IT AGAIN. BECAUSE, FOR MILLIONS OF OUR FELLOW CITIZENS, THE OCCASION IS PILED HIGH INDEED WITH DIFFICULTY. IT WOULD BE EASY FOR ME TO JOIN IN CRITICISMS OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION THAT HAVE FILLED THIS HALL AND APPEALED TO OUR PARTISAN INSTINCTS. IT WOULD BE EASY FOR ME TO POINT TO THE UNCERTAINTY THAT ATTENDS EVERY UNION MEETING, THE WORRY THAT ACCOMPANIES EVERY HOUSEWIFE TO THE SUPERMARKET, THE DESPAIR THAT IS THERE IN LINE WITH THOUSANDS OF BLACK AND BROWN AND WHITE AMERICANS WHO WAIT TO COLLECT UNEMPLOYMENT OR WELFARE CHECKS, INSTEAD OF PAY CHECKS.

IT IS EASY IN 1980 FOR US TO TALK TOUGH, AND REASSURE AN ANXIOUS AMERICAN MOTHER THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO SEND HER SON INTO BATTLE. BUT TALK IS CHEAP. WE AS A PARTY MUST OFFER MORE THAN CAMPAIGN RHETORIC IF WE ARE TO FULFILL OUR LEGITIMATE ROLE.



NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG. I SHARE YOUR OPINION OF THE LAST THREE YEARS. BUT AS LINCOLN REMINDS US, WE CANNOT ESCAPE HISTORY. NOR CAN WE ESCAPE OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO OFFER AMERICANS OF ALL COLORS AND CREEDS A BETTER SHOT AT A BETTER LIFE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO VERY FAR FROM THIS CONVENTION HALL TO SEE YOUNG MEN CONDEMNED TO THE DEADEND OF A GHETTO STREET CORNER. LOOK AROUND AND YOU CAN SEE THE HANDICAPPED, AND THE OLDER AMERICAN, OF WHOM THOUSANDS ARE DEPRIVED OF THE INDEPENDENCE THAT IS THEIR RIGHT. WE CANNOT FORGET THEM, AND IN OUR PLATFORM, WE HAVE SPOKEN CLEARLY AND COMPASSIONATELY ABOUT THEIR NEEDS AND OUR POSITIVE RESPONSE. WE TALK ABOUT THE FAMILY IN OUR PLATFORM. WE TALK ABOUT NEIGHBORS, ABOUT WORKING, ABOUT PEACE AND FREEDOM IN THE WORLD.

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, IN RECENT MEMORY, WE HAVE WRITTEN INTO THAT PLATFORM A CONCRETE PROGRAM TO CREATE NEW JOBS AND NEW WEALTH FOR ALL AMERICANS, INSTEAD OF MERELY DISTRIBUTING PORTIONS OF A SHRINKING PIE. IN OUR PLATFORM, AND IN THE CAMPAIGN TO COME, WE INTEND TO REACH OUT, TO LEND A HAND, TO OPEN NEW DIALOGUES WITH AMERICANS WHO IN THE PAST MAY NOT HAVE FELT AT HOME IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

THERE IS A REASON FOR ALL THAT. IT GOES BEYOND THE NUMBERS NECESSARY TO WIN AN ELECTION. IT IS NOT THE CYNICAL SLOGANEERING OF FAIR-WEATHER FRIENDSHIP. IT IS QUITE SIMPLY THE RIGHT AND MORAL THING TO DO. IT IS OUR RECOGNITION THAT THE 1980'S ARE PILED HIGH WITH DIFFICULTY -- AND OUR ABILITY TO SEE POSSIBILITIES EVEN GREATER THAN OUR PROBLEMS.

WE NEED TO ATTACK INFLATION AT ITS ROOTS, BALANCING THE FEDERAL BUDGET, INDEXING THE TAX SYSTEM TO PROTECT HARD-EARNED WAGES, REGULATING THE REGULATORS WHO WOULD EMBALM OUR ONCE VIGOROUS ECONOMY FOR BURIAL, RIGHT ALONGSIDE THE AMERICAN DREAM.

IT IS THAT DREAM THAT WE SHARE WITH THE AUTO WORKER IN DETROIT, THE STEELWORKER IN PITTSBURGH, THE AEROSPACE WORKER IN CALIFORNIA AND KANSAS. THEY SHARE OUR DREAM OF RESTORING AMERICA'S COMPETITIVE EDGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE. THEY SHARE OUR CONVICTION THAT, IN DECLARING WAR ON THE INVESTOR AND ENTREPRENEUR, WASHINGTON HAS ALSO TURNED ITS BACK ON TRUE ECONOMIC JUSTICE.



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WE BELIEVE THAT THE BEST FORM OF JUSTICE IS A JOB. AND WE INTEND TO PUT MILLIONS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS BACK TO WORK -- WHILE TAKING THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR PLIGHT OFF THE PUBLIC PAYROLL. WE PROPOSE TO SOLVE THE ENERGY CRISIS, BY RESORTING TO COMPETITION. REMEMBER COMPETITION? IT DID GREAT THINGS FOR THIS COUNTRY ONCE. IT MADE US THE ENVY OF THE WORLD, AND ELEVATED OUR STANDARD OF LIVING TO HEIGHTS UNDREAMED OF BY PREVIOUS GENERATIONS.

WE STILL BELIEVE IN COMPETITION -- BECAUSE WE STILL BELIEVE THAT AMERICA IS ONLY HERSELF WHEN SHE STRIVES TO BE GREAT. FROM OUR EARLIEST DAYS, AMERICA'S MOST POWERFUL WEAPONS WERE NOT MISSILES, BUT IDEALS. AND THE GREATEST IDEAL OF ALL IS FREEDOM. FREEDOM MADE US GREAT. FREEDOM MADE US PROSPEROUS. FREEDOM UNLEASHED OUR TALENTS AND ELEVATED OUR VISION. FREEDOM IS WHAT THIS PARTY LIVES TO PROTECT.

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BUT FREEDOM ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH FOR US TO PROMISE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IN 1980. AS LONG AS ONE AMERICAN IS NEEDLESSLY OUT OF WORK, AS LONG AS ONE AMERICAN IS HUNGRY AMIDST OUR ABUNDANCE, AS LONG AS ONE AMERICAN HAS HIS OR HER ASPIRATIONS DASHED BY AN UNCARING OR INSENSITIVE BUREAUCRACY -- THEN FREEDOM MUST MARCH IN LOCKSTEP WITH COMPASSION.

WE CAN WIN THIS ELECTION BY TWO WAYS, MY FELLOW REPUBLICANS. WE CAN WIN IT AS A REJECTION OF JIMMY CARTER AND ALL THE MISTAKES WE HAVE COME TO ASSOCIATE WITH HIS ADMINISTRATION. OR WE CAN WIN IT ON OUR OWN, BY OFFERING A POSITIVE ALTERNATIVE THAT PROMOTES GREATER PROSPERITY, GREATER EMPLOYMENT, GREATER NATIONAL SECURITY, AND A MORE COMPASSIONATE WAY OF HELPING THOSE WHO WANT NOTHING MORE FROM LIFE THAN A CHANCE TO JOIN IN THE COMPETITION THAT IS THE AMERICAN BIRTHRIGHT.

WHETHER WE WIN IS UP TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. WHETHER WE DESERVE TO WIN IS UP TO OURSELVES. THE OCCASION IS PILED HIGH WITH DIFFICULTY, AND WE MUST RISE FOR THE OCCASION. WE MUST DISENTHRAL OURSELVES, AND THEN WE SHALL SAVE OUR COUNTRY.



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TO MY FELLOW AMERICANS, I SAY -- DISENTHRAL YOURSELVES FROM THE FAILED DOGMAS OF A DESPERATE PAST. CAST OFF THE MISGUIDED MEN WHO LACK FAITH IN AMERICA'S CAPACITY TO EMPLOY EVERY MAN AND WOMAN WHO WANTS TO WORK. REJECT THOSE WHO WOULD OFFER EXCUSES FOR WHY PROBLEMS HAVE NOT BEEN SOLVED -- AND TURN INSTEAD TO A CARING, COMPETENT, REPUBLICAN PARTY WHO WILL SET THIS COUNTRY FREE FROM THE BONDAGE OF DESPAIR.

I WOULD REMIND YOU THAT IT WAS A DISTINGUISHED DEMOCRAT, ADLAI STEVENSON OF ILLINOIS, WHO ACCEPTED HIS PARTY'S PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION WITH THE WORDS, "WE MUST LOOK FORWARD TO GREAT TOMORROWS".

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TONIGHT, IT IS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THAT OFFERS HOPE TO THE HOPELESS, JOBS TO THE JOBLESS, AND A STAKE IN SOCIETY, FOR THOSE WHO HAVE YET TO TAKE THEIR PLACE IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MAINSTREAM. IT IS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY THAT OFFERS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE A VISION OF THE EIGHTIES AS SOMETHING NOBLER THAN A LOST DECADE.

WE ARE A GREAT NATION, BECAUSE WE ARE A COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE. MAKE THAT COMPASSION THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR CAMPAIGN IN 1980. DO NOT TRY TO ESCAPE HISTORY. DO NOT FAIL TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY THAT HISTORY HAS GIVEN US TO BECOME A MAJORITY PARTY AT LAST.

MARCH TO THE LINCOLN MUSIC. ONCE AGAIN, MY FELLOW REPUBLICANS, DISENTHRAL YOURSELVES FROM THE EASY WAY TO WIN IN NOVEMBER -- AND THEN, TRULY, WE SHALL SAVE OUR COUNTRY.



NOW, IT IS MY GREAT PRIVILEGE TONIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN HONORING ONE OF THE GREAT FIGURES IN THE HISTORY OF OUR REPUBLICAN PARTY.

HE IS A MAN WHO HAS GIVEN ALMOST HALF A CENTURY OF SERVICE TO A PARTY HE HAS LOVED, NURTURED AND GUIDED. HE HAS SERVED IN VARIOUS ROLES, FROM ERRAND BOY IN A 1931 MAYORAL RACE TO CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

THE MAN WE ARE HONORING TONIGHT IS A SON OF THE GREAT STATE OF OHIO. BUT HE BELONGS TO REPUBLICANS EVERYWHERE. IT WAS IN OHIO THAT HE FIRST MADE HIS MARK. HE TOOK A DISPIRITED, DEFEATED OHIO PARTY AND RESTORED IT TO ITS PREMIER POSITION IN THE STATE. HE WAS NOTICED AS A MAN TO RECKON WITH.

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WHEN IN 1965, HE BECAME CHAIRMAN OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE, HE FACED AN EQUALLY DIFFICULT CHALLENGE. HE PERFORMED BRILLIANTLY. BY 1968, OUR PARTY HELD 31 GOVERNORSHIPS, INSTEAD OF 17; 43 SENATORS INSTEAD OF 32; AND 192 HOUSE MEMBERS, INSTEAD OF 140. UNDER HIS TENURE, WE CONTROLLED 20 STATE LEGISLATURES INSTEAD OF 7.

IT HAS BEEN SAID OF TONIGHT'S SPECIAL GUEST THAT HE WAS THE MAN WHO MADE OUR PARTY A PARTY AGAIN. HE ALMOST SINGLE-HANDEDLY RESCUED AND REBUILT OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, BY PUTTING TOGETHER THE REPUBLICAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE. AND HE WAS A TIRELESS WORKER, ALWAYS WILLING TO PUT HIS ENTIRE HEART INTO MAKING REPUBLICANS A POTENT FORCE IN AMERICAN POLITICS.

HE IS A MAN WHO COULD INNOVATE. HE FOUNDED THE STATE CHAIRMAN'S ASSOCIATION, WHICH HAS STRENGTHENED COMMUNICATION AMONG OUR STATE COMMITTEES AND HAS FOSTERED FRIENDSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP THAT TRANSCENDS THE PURELY POLITICAL.



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THE INDIVIDUAL WE HONOR TONIGHT HAS BEEN CALLED, WITH ADMIRATION, BUT RATHER UNFAIRLY, A "NUTS AND BOLTS MAN".

THAT IS TOO SIMPLISTIC. WHAT HE REALLY IS IS A MASTER BUILDER, AN ARCHITECT OF THE POSSIBLE. EACH OF US IN THIS ARENA OWES HIM A GREAT DEBT, FOR TRULY WE HAVE BUILT ON HIS FOUNDATION. WE CAN DO NO LESS THAN HONOR THIS POLITICAL CRAFTSMAN.

THUS, I AM HONORED TO PRESENT THIS SOLID GOLD MEDAL TO A GREAT REPUBLICAN AND A GREAT AMERICAN -- CHAIRMAN RAY BLISS.