

RN's Copy

Acceptance Speech  
August 8, 1968

Sixteen years ago I stood before this Convention to accept your nomination as the running mate of one of the greatest Americans of our time -- or of any time -- Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Eight years ago, I had the highest honor of accepting your nomination for President.

Tonight, I again proudly accept that nomination.

1. But this time there is a difference.
2. This time we are going to win.

(1) General Eisenhower, as you all know, lies critically ill ~~in Washington D.C.~~ <sup>in Washington D.C.</sup> ~~tonight unable even to watch these proceedings on television~~ but I just talked with Mrs. Eisenhower on the telephone.

1. She tells me that his heart is with us -- that there is nothing that he lives more for and there is nothing that would ~~please~~ <sup>pleas</sup> him more than for us to win in November.

(1) I say -- Let's win this one for Ike.

We are going to win because this great Convention has demonstrated to the nation that the Republican Party has the leadership, the platform and the purpose that America needs.

We are going to win because you have nominated as my running mate a statesman of the first rank who will be a great campaigner and one who is fully qualified to undertake the new responsibilities that I shall give to the next Vice President of the United States.

We are going to win because at a time America cries out for the unity that this Administration has destroyed, the Republican Party -- after a spirited contest for its nomination -- stands united before the nation.

1. I congratulate Governor Romney, Governor Rockefeller and Governor Reagan for the hard fight they have made for this nomination.

- (1) I know that all of you will fight even harder for the great victory our party is going to win in November.

2. A party that can unite itself will unite America.

Most important -- we are going to win because our cause is right.

1. My fellow Americans, we make history tonight -- not for ourselves alone but for the ages.

2. The choice we make in 1968 will determine not only the future of America but the future of peace and freedom of the world for the last third of the Twentieth Century.

Can America meet this great challenge?

1. Let us look at America and listen to America to find our answer.
  - (1) We see cities enveloped in smoke and flame.
  - (2) We hear sirens in the night.'
  - (3) We see Americans dying on distant battlefields abroad.
  - (4) We see Americans hating each other; fighting each other; killing each other at home.
2. As we see and hear these things, millions of Americans cry out in anguish.
  - (1) Did we come all this way for this?
  - (2) Did American boys die in Normandy, Korea and Valley Forge for this?

Listen to the answer to those questions.

1. It is another voice.

2. It is the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans -- the non-shouters; the non-demonstrators.

(1) They are not racists or sick; they are not guilty of the crime that plagues the land.

(2) They are black and they are white -- native born and foreign-born -- young and old.

(3) They work in America's factories.

(4) They run American businesses.

(5) They serve in government.

(6) They provide most of the soldiers who died to keep us free.

(7) They give drive to the spirit of America.

(8) They give lift to the American Dream.

(9) They give steel to the backbone of America.

5. They are good people, decent people; they work, they save, they pay their taxes, they care.

(1) Like Theodore Roosevelt, they know that this country will not be a good place for any of us to live in unless it is a good place for all of us to live in.

This, I say, is the real voice of America. And in this year 1968, this is the message it will broadcast to America and to the world.

1. Let's never forget that despite her faults, America is a great nation.

2. America is great because her people are great.

(1) With Winston Churchill, we say:

"We have not journeyed all this way across the centuries, across the oceans, across the mountains, across the prairies because we are made of sugar candy."

3. America is in trouble today not because her people have failed but because her leaders have failed.

4. What America needs are leaders to match the greatness of her people.

They know that the great question Americans must answer by their votes in November is this: Whether we shall continue for four more years the policies of the last five years.

1. This is their answer and this is my answer to that question.'

- (1) When the strongest nation in the world can be tied down for four years by a war in Vietnam with no end in sight;
- (2) When the richest nation in the world can't manage its own economy;
- (3) When the nation with the greatest tradition of the rule of law is plagued by unprecedented lawlessness;
- (4) When the President of the United States cannot travel abroad or to any major city at home without fear of a hostile demonstration -- then it is time for new leadership for America.

My fellow Americans, I accept the challenge and the commitment to provide that new leadership for America.

1. I ask you to accept it with me.
2. Let us accept this challenge not as a grim duty but as an exciting <sup>or</sup> venture in which we are privileged to help a great nation realize its destiny.
3. Let us begin by committing ourselves to the truth -- to see it like it is, and tell it like it is -- to find the truth, to speak the truth, and to live the truth.

(1) We have had enough of big promises and little action.

✓ (2) The time has come for honest government in America.

I do not promise the millenium in the morning.

1. I do not promise that we can eradicate poverty, end discrimination, eliminate all danger of war in the space of four, or even eight years. But, I do promise action -- a new policy for peace abroad; a new policy for peace and progress and justice at home.

As we look at America abroad, we face the stark truth that we are worse off in every area of the world than we were when President Eisenhower left office eight years ago. There is only one answer to such a record of failure -- it is a complete housecleaning of those responsible for our failure and a complete re-appraisal of America's policies in every section of the world.

1. We shall begin with Vietnam.

(1) We hope there is a chance that current negotiations may bring an honorable end to the war.

1. We will say nothing during this campaign that might destroy that chance.

- (2) If the war is not ended when the people choose in November, the choice will be clear.
1. For four years this Administration has had at its disposal the greatest military and economic advantage that one nation has had over another in any war in history.
  2. For four years, America's fighting men have set a record for courage and sacrifice unsurpassed in our history.
  3. For four years, this Administration has had the support of the Loyal Opposition for the objective of seeking an honorable end to the struggle.
- (3) Never has so much military, economic and diplomatic power been used so ineffectively.
- (4) If after all of this time and all of this sacrifice and all of this support there is still no end in sight, then I say the time has come for the American people to turn to new leadership - not tied to the policies and mistakes of the past.



2. The first priority foreign policy objective of our next Administration will be to bring an honorable end to the war in Vietnam.

3. We shall not stop there -- we need a policy to prevent more Vietnams.

(1) All of America's peace-keeping institutions and all of America's foreign commitments must be re-appraised.

1. Over the past twenty-five years, America has provided more than one-hundred-fifty billion dollars in foreign aid to nations abroad.

(1) In Korea and again in Vietnam, the United States furnished most of the money, most of the arms, and most of the men to help the people of those countries defend themselves against aggression.

2. We are a rich nation, a strong nation and a populous nation. But there are two-hundred-million people in America and two-billion people in the Free World.

3. The time has come for other nations in the Free World to bear their fair share of the burden of defending freedom and keeping the peace.

4. This is not a new isolationism. It is a new internationalism in which America enlists its allies and friends around the world in those struggles in which their interest is as great as ours.

*truth*

To the leaders of the Communist world, we say: After an era of confrontation, the time has come for an era of negotiation.

1. Where the world's super powers are concerned, there is no acceptable alternative to peaceful negotiation.

(1) Because this will be a period of negotiation, we shall restore the strength of America so that we shall always negotiate from strength and never from weakness.

2. As we seek peace through negotiation, our goals should be made clear:

(1) We do not seek domination over any other country.

(2) We believe deeply in our ideas, but we believe they should travel on their own power and not on the power of our arms.

(3) We shall never be belligerent but we shall be as firm in defending our system as they are in expanding theirs.

- (4) We believe this should be an era of peaceful competition, not only in the productivity of our factories but in the quality of our ideas.
- (5) We extend the hand of friendship to the Russian people, and to the Chinese people, and to all peoples in the world.
- (6) We shall work toward the goal of an open world -- ~~open~~ skies, open cities, open hearts, open minds.

The next eight years will be a period in which we will have the greatest opportunity for world peace and face the greatest danger of world war.

1. I believe we must have peace. I believe that we can have peace.
2. I do not underestimate the difficulty of this task.
  - (1) The art of preserving peace is greater than that of waging war and more demanding.
3. But I am proud to have served in an Administration which ended one war and kept the nation out of other wars for eight years.
  - (1) It is that kind of experience and that kind of leadership that America needs today.

As we commit to new policies for America tonight, let us make one further pledge:

1. For five years hardly a day has gone by without our reading or hearing a report of the American flag being spit on; an embassy being stoned; a library being burned; or an ambassador being insulted someplace in the world. Each incident reduced respect for the United States until the ultimate insult inevitably occurred.

- (1) I say that when respect for ~~the~~ United States has fallen so low that a fourth rate military power, like North Korea, will hijack a United States naval vessel on the high seas it is time for new leadership to restore respect for the United States of America around the world.

America is a great nation.

1. It is time we started to act like a great nation.
2. It is ironic to note that when we were a small nation -- weak militarily and poor economically - America was respected.
3. The reason was that America stood for something then more powerful than military strength or economic wealth.

- (1) The American Revolution was a shining example of freedom in action which caught the imagination of the world.
  
- (2) Today, too often, America is an example to be avoided and not followed.
  1. A nation that can't keep the peace at home won't be trusted to keep the peace abroad.
  
  2. A President who isn't treated with respect at home will not be treated with respect abroad.
  
  3. A nation which can't manage its own economy; can't tell others how to manage theirs.

If we are to restore prestige and respect for America abroad, the place to begin is at home.

1. We must recognize that there is no ground more important than the ground we stand on.

We live in an age of revolution in America and in the world.

1. To find the answers to our problems, let us turn to a revolution that will never grow old -- the world's greatest continuing revolution -- the American Revolution.

The American Revolution was and is dedicated to progress, but our founders recognized that the first requisite of progress is order.

1. There is no quarrel between progress and order --  
neither can exist without the other.
2. Let us have order in America -- not the order that  
suppresses dissent and discourages change but the order  
which guarantees the right to dissent and provides the basis  
for peaceful change.
3. It is time for some honest talk about the problem of order  
in the United States.
  - (1) Let us always respect our courts and those who serve  
on them. But let us also recognize that some of our  
courts in their decisions have gone too far in weakening  
the peace forces as against the criminal forces and we  
must act to restore that balance.
  - (2) Let those who have the responsibility to enforce our  
laws and our judges who have the responsibility to  
interpret them be dedicated to the great principles of  
civil rights.
    1. Let them also recognize that the first civil right  
of every American is to be free from domestic  
violence.

(3) If we are to restore order and respect for law in this country there is one place to begin. We are going to have a new Attorney General of the United States.

1. I pledge to you that our Attorney General will be directed to launch a war against organized crime in this nation.

2. I pledge to you that the next Attorney General of the United States will be an active belligerent against the loan sharks and the numbers racketeers who rob the urban poor.

3. I pledge to you that the next Attorney General will open a new front against the filth peddlers and the narcotics peddlers who are corrupting the lives of our children.

3. Let this message come through clear from what I say tonight -- Time is running out for the merchants of crime and corruption in American society.

4. The wave of crime is not going to be the wave of the future in America.

5. We shall re-establish freedom from fear in America so that America can take the leadership in establishing freedom from fear in the world.

To those who say law and order is the code word for racism, this is our reply:

1. Our goal is justice for every American.
2. If we are to have respect for law in America, we must have laws that deserve respect.
3. Just as we cannot have progress without order; we cannot have order without progress.
  - (1) As we commit to order, let us commit to progress.

This brings us to the clearest choice among the great issues of this campaign.

1. For the past five years we have been deluged by programs for the unemployed; programs for the cities; programs for the poor.
  - (1) And we have reaped from these programs an ugly harvest of frustration, violence and failure across the land.
2. Now our opponents will be offering more of the same -- more billions for government jobs, government housing, government welfare.



- (1) It is time to quit pouring billions of dollars into programs that have failed.
- (2) We are on the wrong road -- it is time to take a new road. *for progress*

Again, we turn to the American Revolution for our answer:

1. The war on poverty in America did not begin five years ago.
2. It began when this country began.
3. It has been the most successful war on poverty in the history of nations.
  - (1) There is more wealth in America today, more broadly shared, than in any nation in the world.
4. We are a great nation. We must never forget how we became great.
  - (1) America is a great nation not because of what government did for people -- but because of what people did for themselves.

It is time to apply the lessons of the American Revolution to our present problems.

1. Let us increase the wealth of America so that we can provide more generously for the aged; for the needy; for all those who cannot help themselves.

2. But, for those who are able to help themselves -- what we need are not more millions on welfare rolls -- but more millions on payrolls.
3. Instead of government jobs, and government housing, and government welfare, let government use its tax and credit policies to enlist in this battle the greatest engine of progress ever developed in the history of man -- American private enterprise.
  - (1) Private enterprise, far more effectively than the government, can provide the jobs, train the unemployed, build the homes, offer the new opportunities which will produce progress - not promises - in solving the problems of America.
4. Let us enlist in this great cause the millions of Americans in volunteer organizations who will bring a dedication to this task that no amount of money could ever buy.
5. Let us build bridges to human dignity across that gulf which today separates black America from white America.
  - (1) Black Americans don't want more government programs which perpetuate dependency.
  - (2) They don't want to be a colony in a nation.

- (3) They want the pride, the self-respect and the dignity that can only come if they have an equal chance to own their own homes, their own businesses, to be managers and executives as well as workers, to have a piece of the action in the exciting ventures of private enterprise.
- (4) I pledge that we shall have new programs which will provide that equal chance.

We make great history tonight.

1. We do not fire a shot heard 'round the world but we shall light the lamp of hope in millions of homes across this land in which there has been no hope before.
2. And that great light shining out from America will again become a beacon of hope for all those in the world who seek freedom and opportunity.

My fellow Americans, I believe that historians will record that 1968 marked the beginning of the American generation in world history.

1. Just to be alive in America at this time is an experience unparalleled in history. Here is where the action is.
  - (1) Thirty-two years from now most Americans living today will celebrate a new year that comes once in a thousand years.

- (2) Eight years from now, in the second term of the next President, we will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the American Revolution.
- (3) By our decision in this election, we will determine what kind of nation America will be on its 200th birthday, and what kind of a world America will live in in the year 2000.

This is the kind of a day I see for America on that glorious Fourth -- eight years from now.

1. I see a day when Americans are once again proud of their flag. When once again at home and abroad, it is honored as the world's greatest symbol of liberty and justice.
2. I see a day when the President of the United States is respected and his office honored because it is worthy of respect and honor.
3. I see a day when every child in this land, regardless of color or background has a chance for the best education our wisdom and schools can provide, and an equal chance to go as high as his talents will take him.
4. I see a day when life in rural America attracts people to the country, rather than driving them away.

5. I see a day when we can look back on massive break-  
throughs in solving the problems of slums, pollution and  
traffic which are choking our cities to death.
6. I see a day when our senior citizens and millions of others  
can plan for the future with the assurance that their government  
is not going to rob them of their savings by destroying the  
value of their dollars.
7. I see a day when we will again have freedom from fear in  
America and freedom from fear in the world.
8. I see a day when our nation is at peace and the world is  
at peace and everyone on earth -- those who hope, those who  
aspire, those who crave liberty -- will look to America as a  
living example of hopes realized and dreams achieved.

My fellow Americans, this is the cause I ask you to vote for. This is  
the cause I ask you to work for. This is the cause I ask you to commit to.  
-- not just for victory in November but beyond into the new Administration.

The time when one man or a few leaders could save America is gone.

1. We need nothing less than the total commitment and the  
total mobilization of the American people if we are to  
succeed.

Government can pass laws. But respect for law can come only from people who take the law into their hearts and minds -- and not into their hands.

Government can provide opportunity. But, opportunity means nothing unless people are prepared to seize it.

A President can ask for reconciliation in the racial conflict that divides Americans. But, reconciliation will come only from the hearts of people.

As we make this commitment tonight -- let us look into our hearts and let us look down into the faces of our children.

1. Is there anything in the world that should stand in their way?
2. None of the old hatreds mean anything when we look down into the faces of our children.
3. In their faces is our hope, our love, our courage.

Tonight, I see the face of a child.

1. He lives in a great city. He is black. He is white. He is Mexican, Italian, Polish. None of this matters. What does matter is that he is an American child.

2. That child is more important than any politician's promise.  
He is America. He is a poet, a scientist, a great teacher,  
a proud craftsman. He is everything we have ever hoped to  
be and everything we dare to dream to be.

3. He sleeps the sleep of childhood and dreams its dreams.

4. Yet when he awakens he awakens to a living nightmare of  
poverty, neglect and despair.

(1) He fails in school.

(2) He ends up on welfare.

(3) For him the American system is one that feeds his  
stomach and starves his soul.

1. It breaks his heart.

2. And in the end it may take his life on some  
distant battlefield.

5. To millions of children in this rich land, this is their  
prospect for the future.

But, this is only part of what I see in America.

1. I see another child.

2. He hears the train go by at night and dreams of far away places he would like to go.

(1) It seems like an impossible dream.

3. But he is helped on his journey through life.

(1) A father who had to go to work before he finished the sixth grade, sacrificed everything so that his sons could go to college.

(2) A gentle, Quaker mother, with a passionate concern for peace, quietly wept when he went to war but understood why he had to go.

(3) A great teacher, a remarkable football coach, an inspirational minister encouraged him on his way.

(4) A courageous wife and loyal children stood by him in victory and defeat.

(5) In his chosen profession of politics, first scores, then hundreds, then thousands, and finally millions worked for his success.

(6) Tonight he stands before you - nominated for President of the United States.



You can see why I believe so deeply in the American Dream.

1. For most of us the American Revolution has been won;  
the American Dream has come true.

I ask you to help me make that dream come true for millions to whom  
it is an impossible dream today.

~~This is the cause in which we enlist tonight.~~

One-hundred-eight years ago, the newly elected President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, left Springfield, Illinois, never to return again. He spoke to his friends gathered at the railroad station. Listen to his words:

"Today I leave you. I go to assume a greater task than devolved on General Washington. The great God which helped him must help me. Without that great assistance, I will surely fail. With it, I cannot fail."

Abraham Lincoln lost his life but he did not fail.

The next President of the United States will face challenges in some ways greater than those of Washington or Lincoln. For the first time in our nation's history, an American President faces not only the problem of restoring peace abroad but also of restoring peace at home.

1. Without God's help and your help, we will surely fail;  
With God's help and your help, we shall surely succeed.

My fellow Americans, the long dark night for America is about to end.

1. The time has come for us to leave the valley of despair and climb the mountain so that we may see the glory of the dawn -- a new day for America, a new dawn for peace and freedom in the world.

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