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Office of the Vice President
(St. Paul, Minnesota)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE ELEPHANT CLUB RECEPTION
MINNESOTA CLUB
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

(AT 6:45 P.M. CST)

George, thank you very much. I would just like to thank Frank and Rick and Sis and all of you for the opportunity of being here tonight.

I would just like to say a few words, if I may. First, to thank everybody who is here for their support in the Republican Party. Let's face it, ladies and gentlemen, this is what counts. You are the ones making the financial ends of this possible.

I happen to believe very deeply in the two-party system, and it can only operate if there are two elements. One is men and women who are willing to give of their time and energy to work in the party and to be the chairmen and vice-chairmen, captains, and so forth, from top to bottom. But they can't do an effective job unless they have financial support. That is pretty hard to come by today, and it is getting harder all the time.

Therefore, a gathering of this kind spells strong support for the Republican Party, and it is deeply appreciated by all of us who care about this country.

I would just like to say not only do we appreciate your financial support, but maybe you will follow your money into the party and take an active interest in the party, because it needs your participation.

Without a two-party system, we can't have crystallization of the issues which are tremendously important, and particularly today.

I have just been discussing a substantive question over here about the condition of the tracks of the railroads. I am getting some good advice. It just pays to have people who have the facts who will give them to you. Sometimes those of us in government don't know, so we need to have this exchange with men and women who are involved in the basic economic and social life of this country who involve themselves in the party and who help play that role in shaping the issues that are going to be the ones that have to be considered by the people in selecting the candidates.

This is the role of a party. Then getting out and reaching the people; and I must say Rick has been telling me about the way you are raising money and going directly to the voters, to the Republican members and getting them to contribute annually and be participants. It is a very exciting thing. So I am delighted to see

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this, and it is symbolic of the vitality of the party here in Minnesota.

I want to say that to be here with your former Governor, my good friend, is one of the happiest things for me, because he and I have had the very happy association both in the Governor's association and since. Of course, his wife is your National Committeewoman.

Now the other point I would like to just mention briefly is what I did in connection with the political situation in Washington. I came down to Washington because the President asked me to be his Vice President. I was delighted to have an opportunity to be where the action is and to help him as a staff assistant in any way I could in facing the problems this Nation is facing at home and abroad.

They are plenty. They are real, and they are tough. But the opportunities are there. This country has all the resources, human and material, to meet the challenge of today. It has great strength and plays its role, and this is the bastion of freedom, the United States.

I believe in our President and support our President. Now we got involved in what I was trying to avoid, which is the 1976 Vice Presidential position. This country is overrun for Vice Presidents, let me tell you. So you don't have to give a thought to that.

I said the minute I was confirmed -- and it cost a good deal of money and a good deal of time to go through that. The irony was, after that the President appointed me the Chairman of the Committee on Privacy.

(Laughter.)

I guess it was because I had lost all of my privacy. If you think you have been investigated, wait until they put 500 FBI agents on you for six months. That is what I went through. So that I feel as though I was standing here naked in front of you, but not figuratively.

(Laughter.)

Anyhow, when it became evident that there was a problem and there were squabbles in the party about my being there in connection with the ticket and the President's nomination, I just thought the simplest thing, even though I had said that I was not a candidate, that I hadn't even said whether I would be available, I just decided that the best thing to do was to clarify it by withdrawing from the field entirely in writing, which is the best way to do anything if you want to do it. So I just did.

That leaves the situation totally fluid for him so when he is nominated by the party, as I totally expect and I am confident he will be, that then he can at that time decide who will be his running mate for the best interests of our country and for his own political best interest.

Now, that doesn't mean that I am pulling out of the Republican Party. I am not. I am a very strong, loyal

Republican. So I am delighted to be with him. I will be there for 14 months. You don't have to worry during that period. I hope he can concentrate on the important issues and not have to bother with squabbles within the party. That is what I call a minority within a minority. Believe me, if you want to get out of that status of being a minority, be in a majority before we get through.

(Laughter.)

I think that that leads me to the last point I would like to make, and that is some of the very exciting things that have happened here in your own elections where the Republican Party and the people are coming back. You are winning elections; the Mayor and various Congressional seats, local elections.

Of course, this is what counts. Then the big one is next year. We are in a situation where for the future of this country, whether we are going to preserve the vitality of a free enterprise system, the creativity of America, whether we are going to allow ourselves to be pulled off to the side, away from entrepreneurship into control by bureaucracy.

I have been going around the country for the President having hearings for the Domestic Council on the current policies and programs of the Federal Government in the domestic field. There is one message that comes through loud and clear. That is the American people are fed up with bureaucracy and red tape.

I want to say that is for Governors. It is for Mayors. It is for county executives. It is for businessmen and women in all of these jobs, and it is for the people.

I think that the tragedy is that whereas we sort of thought government was going to solve the problems, more and more people are coming to feel that government is the problem rather than solving them. That is sort of a sad thing to say, but I am afraid a lot of people feel that way.

We have got to do a great deal of work to simplify that role. I want to thank all of you for being here and for what you are doing for the party and for giving it support; and to the degree you can get involved yourself as individuals, you are going to make it an even greater contribution.

We need the brains, the creativity, imagination, experience, of men and women like those of you in this room in the decision-making process, both in the party and in the government itself. So welcome aboard, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

END (AT 6:50 P.M. CST)