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REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE FUND FOR A REPRESENTATIVE CONGRESS
DINNER
INTERNATIONAL BALLROOM
WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D. C.

(AT 9:20 P.M. EST)

Reverend clergy, and to you, Willie Williams, I can't imagine a more moving introduction or one that means more to me than the one that you have just given.

I think that your family and my family have shared a common dream, and that is equal opportunity for all Americans in a free country.

We both worked for it and we both owe this country a great deal.

I am thrilled to be introduced by you and be here this evening. I want to tell you.

I must say, ladies and gentlemen, I had a real estate license, a broker's license, too. I used to be in the same business with you. I want to tell you it is a great business to be in -- and then I got in politics.

But I would like to say about politics that because we are here to talk about politics tonight, that politics is a means to an end, not an end in itself, and the end is good government. Let's not forget that.

When we talk about politics, too many people today are just thinking about politics and not what they are going to do after they get there. But after they get there, the job just really starts.

That is good government for all Americans. That is what I believe in. That is why I came into politics.

I would like to thank Sam Jackson for his sponsorship of this evening, a wonderful man, a wonderful leader, a successful man who has enjoyed and contributed to this great country of ours as has everyone in this room, and Floyd McKissick, another wonderful man about whom one can say the same.

And I listened with tremendous pleasure and interest to a man I admire greatly, Jim Holshouser, Governor of North Carolina, make an eloquent speech talking about the two-party system which has been the lifeblood of this country, it is the lifeblood of democracy.

And then Senator Ed Brooke, another inspiring speech, another great political figure, both men dedicated to this country, dedicated to the service of the

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people of this country. And as I was listening to Ed, I couldn't help but think that Ed Brooke was elected by white votes. That is a very interesting thing. You have got some good black votes, but you got white votes. This is the key to this question, ladies and gentlemen.

If we are going to elect black Republicans, a lot of them are going to be elected by white votes. Let's not forget this point and I have got to tell you that I appointed a Supreme Court Judge for Manhattan, principally Harlem, a black lawyer, Phi Beta Kappa, all-American football player.

I got so mad I appointed him again the second time. He was beaten both times by a white Irishman appointed by the Democratic Party.

Ladies and gentlemen, that doesn't make sense to me. You can't find a finer person than that man who is the finest Judge, I appointed him to a vacancy first, so his range was proven.

I am saying I am telling it like it is, frankly. Maybe I shouldn't say these things as frankly. This isn't my script. I have got a hell of a good script here, too.

But I am reacting, you see, to these speeches I have been listening to.

So let's just be frank, that we are going to have black representatives in the Republican Party, not just because of a black vote, but the white voters who respect black people and want to see them there to represent the country, and they are the best.

I have got to say that when an outstanding -- this country, there is a very sophisticated electorate in this country. I wouldn't be standing here as a Republican if it weren't for Democrats. Let's face it.

I come from a State where the Republican Party is a minority party with a million registered votes. The only reason I am here is I got nominated by the Republican Party in the year they didn't think anyone could win. So I got the nomination.

I am not kidding you. I will tell you this. I like this group. I want to tell it like it is.

I was a little too progressive for the group, but they gave me the nomination because they thought I could finance it and nobody could win. That was 1968.

If you are going to be in this business, there is no use kidding yourself. Whoever invented that statement, tell it like it is, has got to be right, see. I have always tried to look at it like it was.

So I got the nomination and Governor Harriman, a great guy, see, but he was running for President. Do you remember? He was busy running for President. He

thought he had the governorship in the bag. I was out there working and while he wasn't paying too much attention, I beat him by about 500,000 votes.

He didn't think it was going to happen until the last week of the campaign. Then he woke up. But it was too late.

But he is a good friend of mine. That is the way it goes in life. It is like Arthur Goldberg. He was counsel to the AFL-CIO. He had been Secretary of Labor. He is a great man, a great citizen, a great public-spirited person.

He came and ran for Governor in New York and took labor for granted. You can't take anybody for granted in this business. What happened? The AFL-CIO supported me. He never could understand it; never could understand it. I am not so sure I do, either.

(Laughter.)

But the only reason I am saying these things which as I say, I didn't plan to say, but I listened to these two speeches and I think we have got to just sort of, when there is a good person running for office, whether it is Ed Brooke, Jim Holshouser or anybody else here -- we have got Millicent Fenwick around here who has got to be one of the most wonderful Congresswomen. I am looking for more women, whether they are black or white.

We have got Peter Peiper down here -- where is he? He was here. Here he is down here -- the good Congressman from New York.

I think we have just got to vote for people with ability who are dedicated to serve this country and that when an outstanding white person, black person, any other color, any other religion, I don't care, is there, that is the kind of person we ought to support and we need them.

We need, I agree -- and I am going to talk about it until I get to my script -- we need more elected black officials on the Republican ticket, ladies and gentlemen. But it takes two things. You are in the same spot I am in. First, you have to get nominated. That is not so easy.

I am being honest. Then when you are nominated you have got to get elected, and that is not so easy, either. But that is easier than getting nominated for some of us. We have got to sometimes have a hard time.

This is right. I am just telling it like it is. But now Ed said that the President has said down in North Carolina about would he have a black as a Vice President. He mentioned Ed. Ed was very appreciative. Well, I want you to know I have withdrawn to give him the opportunity.

(Laughter.)

So I am cooperating.

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It takes two to tango. The trouble is, you all are too young to know about that. That goes back quite a ways.

Well, all I can say is we are all here to support and promote more black Americans, who are Republicans, in elective office. That is the purpose of this evening and that is why I am here, because I believe in it and I am for it.

I want to tell you I am doing everything I can to help.

This is a means to an end. The end is to expand opportunity for all Americans on the basis of full equality and the best argument for expanding opportunity is right here in this Council of 100. And behind each of your lives is a success story that often is achieved against formidable obstacles; success in fulfilling yourselves as individuals, success in strengthening our country's collectivity, and success in presenting a model to which black youth can aspire.

I have got to say, Willie Williams has got to be one of the examples, one of the younger ones. It just shows you it hasn't got anything to do with age, too. It has got to do with that dream, that drive and that faith.

You have got them all, if you just have a little ability along with it, it doesn't hurt. But you have got to have the others, too; Willie and I know that.

I also want to take this occasion to thank the members of the Council of 100 for their invaluable support when I was trying to get cleared.

I want to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, any of you have been investigated, just don't forget it, because I got investigated by 500 FBI agents for four months. And I want to tell you, then the President appointed me Chairman of a Privacy Committee after I got cleared.

(Laughter.)

Boy, I don't even know what privacy means anymore.

So that you have got to be able to swing and sway with Sammy Kaye. That is another one of those old expressions that date me pretty badly.

But I am deeply honored to have the opportunity of serving the President of the United States, and through him this great country.

I love this country. I believe in it. We have got lots of faults. We have lots of weaknesses. But believe me, ladies and gentlemen, we are slowly making that progress. We have got to speed it up. But we are getting there.

When we get discouraged, all you have to do is to go to some other country and find that everybody there wants to come to live here.

So that it has got to be a little better than sometimes we get discouraged and feel it is.

I would just like to say that when I explain how I got to be Governor, but when I got elected Governor of New York as a Republican, I had a chance to put into practice what my family has believed in and worked for for five generations.

I would just like to say that you have allowed us as a family, the Rockefeller family, to march with you on that long journey, still unfinished, towards human justice, individual dignity and equality of opportunity for all.

During those 15 years, the number of black State employees rose by 50 percent and more importantly, blacks in professional posts rose by 140 percent. And Ersä Posten, my appointee as the first black Chairman of the State Civil Service Commission, deserves a lot of credit.

If you don't know her, you ought to know her because she is here. I want to tell you I didn't see her before dinner. I have got to tell you that is one of the great people.

So is Evelyn Cunningham, sitting down here in front of me, too. She is head of the Women's Division.

We have got some great people in New York, for the rest of you who come from around the country, in case you haven't been there. It is in a little trouble right now. But we won't mention the party that is in power.

That is in New York, I am talking about; both the city and the State. It is right up to the Congress, too.

I would just like to mention a few things. I appointed six black New Yorkers to head of State agencies and 30 others as judges in key sub-cabinet posts because I believe in what you believe in.

I appointed these men and women because New York State government needed their talents. That is why I appointed them, ladies and gentlemen, not just because they were black, because we needed their talents in our government and we got it. We were lucky.

Racial prejudice is not only morally wrong, it is stupidly wasteful. This country can't afford to waste human talent. Obviously, there are a number of things that are essential to the development and release of those talents. Those are worked for, too. Good health and good education are indispensable.

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You can't have equality of opportunity in an industrialized society unless you have got both of those. With those you have got a chance based on your own drive and your own energy.

That is true for all of us. Nobody stated it more clearly or more concisely than Senator Ed Brooke. Political power in public office, he said, have been the keys which opened the doors of opportunity for various groups in America since the founding of our country.

Kenneth Clark, Dr. Kenneth Clark in New York, put it this way: "Social implementation in a democracy is politics and the agents of implementation are public officials."

They are both right. The courts can only do so much. Public opinion does not remain aroused for too long, but elected officials provide the ongoing leadership and the laws that are essential.

Elected officials have to create the framework of laws and incentives to formulate and encourage the creativity and dynamism of the private enterprise system which is the strength of economic growth and increased job opportunities on the basis of equality as well as the strength and vitality of America.

Political power means being heard. Political power means being heeded. Political power means clout.

The way to work towards one's legitimate goals in our system is to make the political system work for the best interests of all. This is exactly what black Americans are doing to an increasing and impressive degree.

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I know that the figures -- of course, the way Ed put them, he sort of started like there just wasn't anybody there. But I happen to think that just like the polls, when you are in an election where the polls are today is insignificant, it is what the trend is, ladies and gentlemen, that is important in politics.

If the trend is up, and I always used to start the elections -- I ran about four times -- start down 25, 35 percent, see, as the underdog, that was the right position for me to be in, too; then kept working up and just before elections, I would cross the line, see.

That is what I am looking at. I am looking at the figures here that show that in 1969, there were 1,185 black elected officials in this country. Today there are 3,503. You can say that is a small percentage, but the trend is up. The trend is in the right direction. Let us keep it going that way. Only, what we want is more Republican black officials and not so many Democrat black officials. But we leave the Democrats there, but just have twice as many Republicans.

I would just like to say that I agree strongly with the statement that Jim made about the two-party system. Blacks have won elections to office that have been undreamed of and in places that have seemed inconceivable just a decade ago. We were inspired by these election victories, but Floyd McKissick laid it right on the line when he said the myth must be destroyed. He said that all blacks can be represented by one political party.

That has got to be the heart of the whole thing. That is what we are trying to break, is that concept. That is what Jim has done, that is what we have tried to do in New York. I want to tell you, it has got to be accepted by the black community as well. They have got to believe -- I know you do -- but the whole black community has got to believe that their interests are best served by a two-party system, as well as the nation, and I believe it is myself, very strongly.

I want to tell you, black voting power is very powerful and it has been very helpful to white Republicans, but not as helpful to black Republicans. That is a very interesting thing. What we need is black voting power applied to black Republican officials. That is what we want to see.

I have got to say that you did a great job -- excuse me, Reverend -- you did a great job in 1974 and in a tough Republican year when you elected, whether they were liberal or conservatives, Republicans who ran well among black voters. But the trouble is -- they are all fine men and women; but the trouble is, they were white, see. But it showed that black voting power is powerful.

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Bob Dole in Kansas, Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma, Jacob Javits of New York, Mc. Mathias of Maryland, Schweiker of Pennsylvania, for the Governors' races, Bennett, Milliken in Michigan, and Rhodes in Ohio.

Just keep this fact in mind, that 55 percent of all black voters are either Republicans or Independents and less than half are Democrats. Those are interesting figures.

So the Republican Party has an excellent chance to succeed with black voters and with black candidates. We just got to be a little more conscious of this and a little more realistic.

The Republican Party has got to show Americans in all walks of life that it understands their problems, that it cares about their problems, and that it has positive approaches to deal with their problems.

So now you are getting down to what I am interested in which is after you get elected, what do you do? That is where the real interest is. That is good government.

I think the best politics is good government. The Party of Lincoln has got to make it clear that it is still in fact the Party of the people, by the people, and for the people -- and that means all kinds of people.

Martin Luther King said it with all the simple eloquence that that wonderful man has and I have got to say that the the tragedies of that family, that one of the people I love and admire in this country is Daddy King.

I don't know how many of you know Daddy King. But that has got to be a fabulous man, what he has suffered and what he has had in the way of the spirit. That is where his son got his inspiration.

Martin Luther King, Jr., said the most significant steps that black Americans can take, he said, is the short walk to the voting booth. He had it all right there, of course.

The immediate reason for encouraging that short but significant walk is to open fully the opportunities of American life to its black citizens.

But even the nobler and wiser reasons is to release the best that lies within each American, for the benefit of all of us, for the betterment of our entire Nation.

So then let us together in this struggle heed the words of Isiah in the Scriptures, and I quote: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount upon the wings as angels. They shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint."

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for letting me share this evening with you. Thank you.