

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 14, 1976

Office of the Vice President
(Des Moines, Iowa)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE REPUBLICAN LINCOLN DAY DINNER
VETERANS MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM
DES MOINES, IOWA

(AT 9:00 P.M. CST)

Ladies and gentlemen, I just have to feel this is America at its best right here in this room tonight. I thank you for letting me be here.

(Applause.)

To be with you on this Lincoln Day Dinner on our Bicentennial, the heart of this great land, to listen to Reverend Grubbs make such a beautiful invocation with such sensitivity, recalling the spiritual inspiration which was the inspiration which brought this country into being, gave it meaning, gave it its inspiration, to speak as he did with such sensitivity about the delicate relations and negotiations between nations with differing points of view that are in conflict -- and I couldn't help think when he spoke of that of the extraordinary dedication of our Secretary of State who has had some pretty rough times but who has given his life to the service of our country in the most delicate area of bringing understanding and avoiding conflict.

This nation under Republican leadership is at peace in the world, thanks to the Republican leaders.

(Applause.)

I say this is America and I feel it. I feel it very deeply. I felt it as I listened to such wonderful speakers tonight, inspirational speakers, who care, who believe in our country; your great Governor.

I have to say, ladies and gentlemen, I was around for quite a while as Governor, so I had a chance to see. There is a certain quality that Bob Ray has that just inspires people. You feel his dedication to our country and to the qualities of life which we believe in, which have made America what it is today.

We are fortunate that men of his integrity and capacity and ability and that of his wife are willing to give themselves to their country in the service of their fellow man as they have done. So I am honored to be here with them.

(Applause.)

I have got to say that Congressman Chuck Grassley, well, he was a source of great inspiration and great joy to

MORE

me to listen to him and to feel that here are young men, and his wonderful wife, coming along who are also in that same tradition.

I have had the pleasure of knowing all of the Senators and Congressmen that he mentioned who were your representatives. I would like to say that they and he were not only your representatives, but they represented all of America. They represent us in New York State. And we are grateful to you for sending men of his caliber to Washington to represent this great Nation. I just want to thank you.

(Applause.)

Of course, Mary Louise Smith is very special. She has all of the qualities which we love in this country, which we respect; inspirational.

I have got to tell you that I am very proud of our party, that our party has elected a woman of such strength and character and such dedication as the Chairman of the Republican National Committee, ladies and gentlemen. We can be proud of that.

(Applause.)

Tom Stoner, your new Chairman, I can't imagine any chairman getting off to a better start than he has. I can understand why; and I can understand why you all want to be here, because that is the kind of leadership -- and I want to talk a little bit later about the party and its role -- that is the kind of leadership which we all need in America, or we in America are fortunate to have some men and women who are willing to give their time and energy to serve our country.

They don't have to. He does it because he cares. You respond because you feel that concern on his part. That is why our party is great and that is why our country is great.

I want to thank Tom for what he is doing and for inviting me here tonight.

(Applause.)

Margaret McDonald, who is sharing in those responsibilities; and to John McDonald on the national scene, we need his strength and leadership in the National Republican organization.

Let's face it, ladies and gentlemen, we can't go anywhere as a party without financial support, because to reach the people and to carry on the responsibilities of leadership in our party there have to be those who are willing to help in raising the funds and there have to be those who are willing, like yourselves, to give the funds.

MORE

I would like to congratulate Bill Goodrich for what he has done and is doing and his part in the success of this evening.

(Applause.)

To all of the distinguished guests and to you fellow Republicans, and I have to add to you discerning Democrats who may have slipped in here this evening, ladies and gentlemen, we welcome you.

For those of you who come from States where we are a minority party, we welcome you even more. The only reason I was elected as Governor four times in a State where we were a minority party by a million registered voters was because there were a great many, I like to think, discerning Democrats who were that free to choose on the basis of who they thought would provide good government rather than just being frozen into a political mold.

(Applause.)

So I would like to thank all of you ladies and gentlemen for your presence here this evening and what it means to our country and to our party, for your support of the party, and most importantly because of your faith in our country and faith in the future, which you demonstrate by being here, and the spirit which is here so obviously this evening.

I am honored to be part of this occasion. I can just say to you that nothing can strengthen my faith in America's future quicker than a visit to Iowa. This is not the first time, and I hope it won't be the last time. I want to thank you again for inviting me.

(Applause.)

To me this State and you in the State epitomize the qualities that built America's greatness. I am especially proud to be here in the home of Mary Louise Smith, as I mentioned, because we love her; we are grateful to her.

I have got to thank her husband who is sitting right down here in front because I want to tell you, whether it is a husband or wife, those of us who are in public life, they deserve one tremendous amount of credit for the role which they play. I would just like to use you as a symbol for what we are grateful for in your support.

(Applause.)

But I think also, and I would like to come back to Bob, I think he epitomizes the outstanding qualities of Iowa in his fantastic record as four-term Governor.

I want to tell you it doesn't make any difference whether you are elected four times for two years or four years; to be elected four times is what counts.

MORE

(Applause and Laughter.)

So I feel he and I are in the same boat, except that now you have got the four-year term, so that you can take one more time and then you are going to break all records.

(Laughter.)

I don't want to interfere with anybody's politics. But as a former Governor, as I mentioned, I have a pretty fair idea of what it takes to do a good job as Governor, and so do the other 49 Governors who, as has just been mentioned, chose Bob as Chairman of the National Governors' Conference.

And then I think that the decision of the party to name him the Chairman of our Platform Committee is of tremendous significance, because in that selection they are picking a person from the heart of the country -- not only geographically, but in the heart of the party in the sense that he is in the center of our party.

That is where the strength is. That is where the understanding of America's hopes and aspirations is, their fears, lodged right there in the heart. He understands that, and he can reflect that and he can bring together and reconcile the different points of view in our party.

Some people feel that we should be a monolithic party, that we shouldn't have different points of view. I have got to say that America was built on citizens who had the courage to think for themselves. I don't know of any two Americans who think alike. But that is the strength of America.

But if we are going to have a party, then we have got to be able to reconcile those different points of view, and the majority wins, and then the minority goes along with the majority, and we have a united party. The minority hopes to win later. But that is their chance and their opportunity.

But that is what Bob is going to do is pull this party together on a platform that will reflect those basic beliefs on which our country was built, those basic concepts and ideas on which our country is going to continue its strength and greatness in its 200th anniversary year, and those with basic hopes and aspirations which express for all Americans our excitement, our faith, and our enthusiasm for the opportunities of the future.

This is the great challenge that Bob has and that Bob is going to deliver for our party and for our country. And we are grateful to him. Bob, I thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MOORE

He can do it because he has had the experience. He is a doer. He is a problem solver. He has given this State better service and better transportation, better education; and, by using sound Republican principles of efficient business-like management, and Republican fiscal responsibility, he has been able to perform the rarest of all feats -- raising the quality of government service while lowering its cost.

That has got to be the essence of what the Republican Party stands for, and he has done it.

(Applause.)

I can't resist the temptation, because I know it has got to be on a few people's minds, New York City has had some problems. I would like to say there are those in Congress, the Congress of the United States -- of course, not Republicans -- but there are those in the Congress of the United States who take the satisfaction -- I hate to say that, but it has been rather cryptic about New York and the fact that they were subject to pressures by one group or another and that they spent more money than they had and that they have gotten in financial difficulties.

But I would like to say, ladies and gentlemen, everything everybody has criticized New York City about the Congress of the United States has done in spades. They have spent more money. They have a \$74 billion deficit this year, if not more.

(Applause.)

And the only difference between the Congress of the United States and New York City is Congress can print the money and New York City can't. So let's keep this in mind when we are talking about New York.

(Applause.)

The trouble is some of them haven't even gotten the message yet. They got it in New York, I can say that. They can't print the money. They are doing their best.

But I tell you, without people like Chuck, I don't know what would happen down there. And the President of the United States who has had the courage to veto one popular spending measure after another because he knew we had to stop inflation in this country.

(Applause.)

I want to tell you these are trying times, but I have to feel, ladies and gentlemen, that out of this -- it is like the tempering of steel; this is a tough process. But I think our country is getting back to fundamentals. We have been overpromising and underdelivering for the last 15 years.

MORE

We have raised the expectations of American people and they now didn't get what they expected. Then we got into these difficulties. They are disillusioned. They are disaffected. You can't blame the young people for their cynicism.

But the net result is we are coming down to earth. And we are beginning to recognize those fundamental things which we were taught as children. We were brought up that you can't spend any more money than you have or can earn or can produce. It is just as true for a family, an individual, a city or a State or the Nation. And it is a good thing we are learning it before it is too late.

(Applause.)

I would like to say that Bob's leadership typifies the strong, solid Americanism that has sprung from the soil of Iowa. You started with God's blessing of rich, fertile land. And you are willing to invest 10 to 12 hours a day, six days a week, into making this one of our most productive spots on earth.

This is why we admire you. This is why we have such tremendous respect for what you have done. This is why you are such an important example of this country. Those are the fundamentals we believe in that have made America what it is.

You were receptive to new ideas and new techniques and new technologies. You applied imagination and creativity. And as a result, you took a State with only 1.6 percent of the land of this country, with less than 1.5 percent of the people of this great Nation, and you made it a leader in total agricultural production -- second only to far larger California; a top producer of corn -- second only to the far more populous State of Illinois; a beef cattle State -- second only to giant Texas; and the Nation's number one hog producer -- second to no one.

(Applause.)

I would like to add, ladies and gentlemen, that never has the rest of this Nation been more indebted to you than we are now, because it is the unmatched farm output of a State like Iowa which has saved America's position in international trade and given us a favorable balance of payments, even after the enormous and rapidly growing drain on our dollars to import oil.

Now, everybody in this country depends on energy. The farmer does, the farmer's wife does; to transport goods, to run our industries, to run our cities -- our way of life. Yet this Nation is in the middle now since the sixties of producing less and less of our own energy and importing more and more. We are up to 40 percent right now of our Nation's consumption of oil being imported. This year it will cost us \$30 billion.

MORE

If it hadn't been for the fact you brought in 60 million acres of new land and that the farmers of America are exporting this year \$22 billion of agricultural products as against eight point some billion in 1973, we wouldn't be able to pay for this.

That is going up every day. We got up to 50 percent one week about a month and a half ago.

I want to tell you that at the present rate, we are not going to be able to pay for it. We are totally vulnerable to another boycott. I go back to the Reverend and his talk about conflicting nations in the world. There could be a blow-up in the Middle East. That has not yet been permanently settled. And only with the greatest diplomatic skill has it been avoided; and the tragedies that have taken place in Lebanon.

If it happened, and if another boycott took place, this time -- and in 1960 we were only spending \$4 billion on imported oil -- this time we could find ourselves in the middle of a situation where economic and social life of this country could move into a chaotic position, to say nothing of our national security.

We are vulnerable. That is why I was very grateful for the opportunity of testifying on Monday before Mr. Proxmire's committee, trying to get this country to face up and take action so that we will have the strength, we will be able to restore the strength of our economy. And if we can't restore the strength of our economy and can't meet America's needs at home and we can't meet our responsibilities abroad, then no other nation that believes in human dignity and freedom can live with a sense of confidence and security.

We are their only hope, ladies and gentlemen. Therefore, we have a tremendous responsibility.

That is not the subject of my speech tonight. But I am worried about that situation, as I think all Americans are. Yet I have to say to you, speaking at a Governors' Conference, of all people, Governor Exon asked me, "How can there be an energy crisis when there is plenty of oil in the pumps?"

I said, "Governor, you have summarized it right there. There is plenty of oil in the pumps because we are importing 40 percent of our needs. The crisis is because if it was cut off, we wouldn't have it; and, therefore, we would have the crisis."

So now is the time to move and take advantage of what we have. Thanks to the blessings of the good lord, we have all the resources to become self-sufficient and to regain our strength and our independence and be able to face whatever we have to face.

But it is not only in agriculture that you have done a good job. Iowans have tripled industrial production.

from both farm-related and completely independent enterprises in just 20 years. Iowa's virtues really symbolize the basic values of this Republican Party. To me there is a sense of self-responsibility, self-discipline, hard work, economic freedom, the faith in the American enterprise system, and confidence that the American people can find answers to their problems without every answer being labeled "made in Washington," This is what I think.

(Applause.)

Here at this Lincoln Day Dinner, it is a pleasure to be among Republicans who live what Lincoln had to say on this subject over a century ago. "The legitimate objective of government," Lincoln advised us, "is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot so well do for themselves in their separate and individual capacities."

Then he went on to say, "In all that the people can individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere."

Ladies and gentlemen, he really had it right there.

(Applause.)

In that statement he really went to the heart of the unique strength and unique qualities of America. What worries me, and I held hearings for the President around the country on domestic policy and domestic programs, and wherever we went, there was testimony from Governors, from Mayors, from county executives, from businessmen, from labor leaders, from welfare recipients, everybody had one story, and that was that people used to look to Washington for the answers to their problems, and that now people are beginning to wonder and worry as to whether Washington is their problem.

Now this is a tragedy, ladies and gentlemen, because we have a great Federal Government, and it has tremendous responsibilities to carry out. But it doesn't need to do what Lincoln pointed out it shouldn't do -- "In all that the people can individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere."

That is the message and the lesson that Washington has now got to learn.

(Applause.)

The fundamental principles of Republicanism which Lincoln believed in, as I say, they are just as valid in our time as they were in his age. But we desperately need to reinforce and refocus our attention on this question.

Tonight I would like to talk to you briefly about the role of our party and its future and some of the problems we face as a Nation. It won't be as long as you think. It is not like Hubert Humphrey, nor the Legislature.

MORE

(Laughter.)

Let me just say the two-party system in my opinion is the strength of our free society. It is the vitality and dynamism. That is why I admire what your leaders are doing here, what you are doing to support it, because we have got to keep two strong live parties -- the parties of our choice.

We happen to all be Republicans. That is why we are here -- except for those discerning Democrats who might switch over and join us. You can't tell. So we welcome you.

There are people who say, "Don't confuse me with the facts; my mind is made up." The world is moving too fast, ladies and gentlemen, for that. We are living in an increasingly interdependent world. We are living in a world in which the rate of change is accelerating.

We have to have the capacity to understand the problems, to analyze them, to relate them to other facets of our lives and our relations in the world; and then come up with sound, intelligent solutions that reflect the best interests of the American people and our responsibilities in the world.

That can't be done with people with closed minds. They have to have open minds. And that is what is going to be done by this platform here.

I would just like to say, secondly, that the two-party system is essential -- I said that -- to the strength and vitality of our American way of life and to the very freedom itself.

Now, the party has the responsibility for four basic things: first, to form the voluntary organizations such as appear here tonight; second, to crystalize the issues and present them to the people, to present alternative approaches to those problems, as I just expressed; and then to select candidates who will be presented to the people for election.

We hope you find a lot more like Chuck, because we need them; young people who are willing to give of themselves and their time and energy in the service of their country.

And then, lastly, the party has to be able to go to the people and communicate with the people about the candidates and about the issues and why this point of view as against that point of view is important for our future.

It is a complicated thing. You can't go on the village green any more because our villages are too big. So we have to use the television and media, and that is expensive.

MORE

That is where you come in and that is why we are so grateful for your presence here tonight. So I want to thank you again.

Now, let's face it, it is complicated today because of the situations that exist. But I would like to say in the State the Governor is the leader of the party and in the Nation the President is the leader. Therefore, President Ford is the leader of our party. Therefore, it is important as Republicans in this election year on our 200th anniversary that we understand what he is doing as our leader.

I would just like to say to you that I had not known this gentleman before. He asked me to run -- not to run, because it was worse than running.

(Laughter.)

I had to go before the Congress to get in, and nothing to do with Chuck, but I want to tell you that is an experience I hope nobody else has to go through. There were 500 FBI agents three months investigating everything I had done since the day I was born -- not only in this country but abroad.

(Laughter.)

I want to tell you, I am here.

(Laughter and Applause.)

But I was asked at the press conference this afternoon whether I didn't think that Watergate and so forth was going to have an adverse effect on the elections and whether the fact that President Ford was appointed by President Nixon would have a hang-over -- he didn't use that word but that is what he had in mind -- from the Watergate situation.

I said if it weren't for the fact the 25th Amendment very wisely says if there is a vacancy in the Vice Presidency, the President makes the nomination and then the Congress investigates and has to confirm or reject.

Now it just happens that the Congress of the United States is two-to-one Democratic. For the first time in the history of this country we have a President and Vice President nominated by Republicans and approved by Democrats.

(Applause.)

So we can lay that to rest.

I would like to say what I revere about a man whom I didn't know, as I said before. First, he loves this country. He is devoted to the basic principles on which this country was founded and on which it has grown to greatness, and he wants to get America back to those principles.

We would all agree with that. And I admire him.

(Applause.)

Secondly, this man has got the courage to study and examine the problems as they arise, and to listen, and he has got great patience to read and study. I have never known anyone who has worked harder. He is up at 5:00 in the morning and works until 11:00 or 12:00 at night. I can't do it myself, but I admire it in him.

He then comes to a conclusion after listening to everybody as to what he thinks is going to be in the best long-term interest of the American people and our responsibilities in the world, and that is the basis and the only basis on which he makes a decision for action, and he disregards the short-term political advantages of that decision.

That is what America needs and this is what we have got. I admire him.

(Applause.)

I think this is the only way we are going to keep our freedom is to have the courage to do what is right for the long term, because the decisions that are made today affect our future. The short-term political considerations may be totally different than the long-term best interests of the United States.

That goes to individual freedom; it goes for economic freedom; and, let's face it, we are celebrating our 200th anniversary. The revolution of this country wasn't just for individual freedom; it was for economic freedom, ladies and gentlemen.

This is one of the basic forces that motivated the founding fathers. Our life was being run from London. It was being controlled from there. They just felt that free citizens with free economic life could develop for the benefit of all of the citizens a higher standard of living and greater opportunity. And they were right. But that depends on economic freedom which we have got to preserve.

And finally, it is religious freedom. This country is deeply religious, but deeply devoted to the freedom of each and every citizen to worship according to their own convictions. God is the interpreter.

I want to tell you that this has been a great heritage and a great tradition in my family. My father believed so deeply in this he built the Interchurch Center on Riverside Drive, with this great heritage and tradition of individual freedom in religion, but that our great religious organizations could come together in the center to give added strength to America as the spiritual base of this great Nation.

(Applause.)

MORE

Now the President has put inflation first as the most insidious and dangerous and difficult problem we face. There is no tax that is worse. I will never forget the story about the cow that you told. It might dry up if they didn't keep milking it every day.

But the President has recognized that inflation is the worst tax on individuals, and those who can least afford to pay -- the retired, the senior citizens, those who built this country, who contributed what we have today. They are the ones who suffer most. Those on fixed incomes, those who are working to support their families, they are the ones who suffer the most.

Therefore, as I said earlier, he vetoed one popular measure after another to try to hold down this inflationary pressure coming from the Federal expenditures way beyond our income. And he has been successful and our inflation rate is below 6 percent, and our economy is picking up.

He believed that jobs could come from private enterprise and they shouldn't be made by government; that people didn't want this, that they want work where they can count on it.

(Applause.)

To give you a few indices from this week's economic report, the sales on both domestic and imported cars rose in March, but compared with a year ago, domestic car sales were up 50 percent, whereas imported car sales were up only 12.5 percent. We are getting back to where we are assuring the job opportunities for American workers, which is a very important part of the economic life of this country.

We have seen a steep January drop. The number of new one-family homes sold increased 14.7 percent in January. The current level is 51 percent above February of last year.

These are very important indices, the fact that the economy is picking up. There are two million more people working today than there were a year ago. Sure, we have still got unemployment. We need two million five hundred thousand more jobs. But they are not going to come from the government. They are going to come from private enterprise and people spending their money, tax reductions, holding down Federal expenditures, and then the public putting their money where they want to put it, and that creating the driving force of our economy.

(Applause.)

Consumer confidence is at a two-year high, just to give you one more. And a very nice thing which is a very important thing because this is one of the tragic sides of life, the rate of increase in serious crime has slowed down to 9 percent over 18 percent the year before. As things get better, I think we are going to see crime cut back. And much

MORE

of that crime grows from people who can't find a job or haven't been able and are, therefore, trying to support their families. So that we have to recognize that that is a collateral tragedy that goes with a deep recession.

In my opinion, ladies and gentlemen, to summarize and bring to a conclusion, President Ford is in tune with the thinking and the feeling of the American people, and I think the American people are in tune with his thinking and his feeling.

He has had the courage to take the stands which were unpopular in many people's eyes, but in the long term, in my opinion, are going to be proven to have been the right ones at this critical moment in the history of our country, which happens to be our 200th anniversary.

So I am very grateful to have the privilege of serving with him.

Now let me just say in conclusion that I am optimistic about the future. Sure, we face tough problems. But I am optimistic about the future of the Republican Party, as demonstrated by your presence here tonight. I am optimistic about the future of this country.

I would just like to say to you in my opinion this has got to be perhaps the most unique moment in the history of civilization. We have all of the scientific and technological knowledge to solve the problems. We have the capacities, we have the raw materials, we can produce the energy, the raw materials and the food -- not only for ourselves, ladies and gentlemen, but working with the rest of the world.

Again going back to the Reverend's thought, we can produce materials which were in the original concept of the missionary drive of this country which will make it possible for others in other parts of the world to do for themselves with our cooperation, based on work and the work ethic and production -- not just cutting up a small piece of pie, but an ever-growing pie in which everybody has a chance for a larger slice. That is the secret.

I spoke at the Club of Rome the night before last in Philadelphia, and they had been talking, as some of you know, about a no-growth policy, that that is what we had to come to.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is not America. No-growth is not America. That is just those who have got it saying, "Pull up the ladder, mates. I am on board. To hell with the rest." "To heck with the rest," excuse me.

That is not America, ladies and gentlemen. We believe in the future. We have faith in the future. That is why we came here. That is why you have done this. That is what we are going back to. And that is our future.

I just think we are going to see one of the great periods in history, and that freedom and respect for human dignity and equality of opportunity are going to come back to being the key note for America's leadership in the world as we enter our 300 years after having 200 years here.

Thank you very much for letting me be here with you. Best of luck to all of you.

(Applause.)

END (AT 9:40 P.M. CST)