

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 1976

Office of the Vice President
(New York, New York)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE
NEW YORK REPUBLICAN STATE DINNER
GRAND BALLROOM, WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

AT 10:00 P.M. EDT

Thank you, Dick. I would like to just say, Betty Ford and Mary Louise Smith and Happy and Polly Gordon and Caroline Amory and Dorothy McHugh and Eunice Whittlesey and Phyllis Kelly and gentlemen --

(Laughter)

That "gentlemen" includes Malcolm and our distinguished Senators and all of the other distinguished leaders we have here who have helped support these women in the wonderful job they do.

(Laughter, applause)

I think, ladies and gentlemen, this is a night to get things straightened out here. I have to say that I don't know when I have listened to more wonderful speeches than we have heard tonight. I think they have been fabulous, every one of them. I am deeply grateful.

To me, ladies and gentlemen, this is an evening we have a great deal to be grateful for, thankful for, and first is the fact that the First Lady is here and that she has done us the honor of coming.

And I have to say that while we are deeply grateful to Al Gordon and to Dorothy and all of you who worked on this dinner, I have got to say I think Betty Ford has a lot to do with the fact that you are here, so I want to thank her first. We love her, we admire her. And I must say, how she has been able to take on the responsibilities which she has in the short time of just a little over two years -- while she knew Washington, had been there and understood the workings of the government, but to assume the position of First Lady and then to allow her own true self to come out in a way that could be felt by the American people, respected, admired and loved is an extraordinary evolution in the short period of two years. And this country is lucky in having such a wonderful First Lady.

And to have the First Lady of the Party here, Mary Louise Smith, too, also is a very significant thing for us.

I have to say parenthetically that we have got to give Jerry Ford a great deal of credit, because he is really responsible for both of them.

(Laughter)

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He was fortunate enough to marry Betty, and he appointed Mary Louise Smith, so we have got to give him credit for these two wonderful women who are here.

If anyone wants to feel the pulse and feel the strength and the dynamism and the enthusiasm of the leadership of the Republican Party, all they have to do is listen to Mary Louise's speech. You see her perception, her deep belief in this country, her belief in equality for all. And I want to tell you she is a leader that we are so fortunate to have in a period when people are looking for integrity and honesty and courage and faith and deep belief in the fundamental values on which this country was founded. She has got them and she can express them.

So these two wonderful people have encouraged this great gathering to come out this evening.

Now I would like to thank all of you, because your presence here is the major reason that our party is in such good shape as tonight, that is, financially. So I want to thank you because, frankly, if it weren't for people like yourselves who were willing to assume that sense of responsibility for the support of the Party in a country which depends on a two-party system for its basic vitality and the strength of freedom -- it depends on the two-party system, and you people are here because you believe in this system and you go on to support the party of your choice. So I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support and being here this evening and making this possible. We have got to give a hand to the audience.

Now, I would like to say next that I think we are very fortunate and we have a great deal to be thankful for in the leadership of the Republican Party, and we have got to start with Dick here. As I said at lunch, a modest fellow who is a little shy, and sometimes he won't step forward and take responsibility, but --theencouragement -- And Eunice and Phyllis have done a great deal to bring him out.

(Laughter)

We have, ladies and gentlemen, tremendous leadership in this Party, which has a deep conviction, just in the case of Mary Louise Smith. And I think the meeting today of the State Committee is a wonderful example of the strength and leadership of the Republican Party in New York State, selecting an outstanding Senator, Jim Buckley, virtually unanimously by the delegation as our candidate. To me, ladies and gentlemen, this shows the tremendous perception and strength of this party in New York and the fact that we represent and believe in the American people, not just a small limited group of people here or there or there.

We want all of the people to come into our party to join with us and so we stretch out our arms and we find Jake Javits and Jim Buckley, and we have got everybody right between them in the party.

(Laughter, applause)

I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that is what we stand for. We stand for America, and America is for people

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who believe in things deeply. And we may not agree with them, but that is not important. They are entitled to their own beliefs. And the strength of this Party is that we have this broad spectrum, and therefore, when we debate and discuss within the Party, we can come to conclusions and then the majority wins. Those who lose in the vote have a chance to come back next time. And this, I think, is why the Republican Party has had the long record of leadership in the legislature, Republican control for so many years in the Executive Branch.

And I would like to say that Jake Javits, who I had the pleasure of running with on various occasions, has got to be one of the most articulate, one of the most respected, one of the most brilliant public servants that is in Washington today, and we are deeply grateful to Jake Javits.

I have a part-time job, ladies and gentlemen, which is presiding over the Senate. In fact, that is my only Constitutional job. Of course, I am not allowed to speak without unanimous consent, and they don't give it to me, so I can't speak. So if I talk a little long tonight, you will understand I haven't had an opportunity like this in quite a while.

(Laughter)

I do get a chance to observe, see, and I observe Jake Javits, and I would like to say to you he is the most astute parliamentarian in the United States Senate, just as Malcolm Wilson is the most astute parliamentarian in the New York State Senate.

I often wish, as I sit there and whisper what I should say next to the advisor that I have, I were the parliamentarian which I mentioned Malcolm is. Then I wouldn't have to ask. I would just know.

With those big words I would have made a tremendous impression on them in our Senate in Washington had I been you.

(Laughter)

But here is a party that stands for the best that is American and believes in it. And we have got two great leaders here from our legislature. Warren Anderson, as I said already, is carrying a tremendous responsibility and a tremendous load and trying to balance out the factors and preserve the values that we deeply believe in in this State. He is doing an extraordinary job, to the gratitude and the respect of everybody in the State from all parties.

And we just hope that after the elections this fall Perry Duryea is going to be back as speaker so he can do the same thing there, and we will have both of them.

I have talked about this wonderful group of leaders, and I want to mention now the man who has probably been elected for a longer period of time in this State than any of those others who are here in office today, because

of his deep devotion to humanity and their hopes and aspirations, their concerns, their well-being, their opportunity, and that is that great Attorney General of ours, Louis Lefkowitz.

As Louis often says, we didn't grow up together, but we have become very good friends.

(Laughter)

And that is the truth. I learned more from Louis than anyone else.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, so much for New York and the Republican Party here. We are just one of 50 States, and we are very glad that we are a part of the United States and that we have the good fortune of being here. But, ladies and gentlemen, our life as a State, our well-being, our security, our opportunities depend on the Federal Government and what happens in Washington.

All we have to do is to go back two years ago and think of what was happening in this country -- the disarray, the loss of confidence in government; the oncoming recession that went into a depression; inflation that was eating away, the corrosive force that undermined those who could least afford to deal with the impact of inflation; then unemployment, a loss of position in the world. That was two years ago.

A man who had been chosen as Vice President, the first person to be chosen under the 25th Amendment, approved by the Congress, became President of the United States. He hadn't sought the office, probably never thought about seeking the office. In that short space of time, ladies and gentlemen, this Congressman and now our President has restored the respect and confidence of the American people in government, a man of tremendous integrity and courage who has had the ability and the patience and the deep devotion to our country to spend the time on the key issues, to understand the problems.

When he was satisfied what was in the best interests, the best long-term interests of the American people, that was what he did, regardless of the political implications. That is the kind of leadership this country needs.

Now, had he done nothing else than restore confidence, we would have said, "Thank the Lord for this leadership." But let's take a look at the economy. The world preachers of doom, who thought we were going into a long depression, who thought that only government spending could be the solution -- and what happened? President Ford believed in the American enterprise system as being the basic strength from which opportunity grows for American citizens, based on initiative, creativity, imagination and drive. He wanted to give that a chance to come back, and he did.

He vetoed more popular measures probably than any President ever has. That took guts, and he has got it.

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And what is happening, ladies and gentlemen? Inflation has been cut in half. It is no longer the issue. Nobody thought that inflation could be stopped and employment achieved at the same time. That miracle has happened.

In the last 12 months, ladies and gentlemen, there are 2,600,000 new jobs in America. We have got a growth of about 1.6 million jobs needed every year. We lost two-and-a-half million jobs in the depression. We caught up on two-and-a-half of the loss, and if we can now catch up on the two-and-a-half more that were needed during that period of growth, we are going to be back to normal.

And at the present growth rate, 8.5 percent growth in GNP -- and I don't think that can be maintained and I don't think it can be maintained without pressures growing on inflation, so it is going to have to slow down some. But even at 7.5 employment is going to gain and we are going to get back to normal.

I am going to tell you, nobody, not even the best optimists, thought that could be achieved in this period. And President Ford has done it, ladies and gentlemen.

Now, those are two tremendous accomplishments, and we would say that his position in history would be made just on the basis of those two. But we go to a third, and that is in the international field. The world is at peace, ladies and gentlemen. For the first time in a long time our country isn't fighting. And I want to tell you, there has never been a more difficult or delicate period than the one we are going through right now.

His patience, his skill, his strength of character and his courage, with the tremendously able assistance of the Secretary of State and his great negotiating ability, have woven their way through these difficult, delicate situations. As a result, the United States' position in the world today is stronger than it has been in years. People respect this country now again, ladies and gentlemen.

This conference the President has called that is going to be held in Puerto Rico on free world economic unity and action, facing common problems, is going to be one of the most significant for the future -- not only of the industrial nations but the developing nations.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I would just like to say this: When you have really got something awfully good and when the opportunities are greater today, in my opinion, than they have ever been at any moment in history to achieve new breakthroughs, new goals, new opportunities -- not only for our country but for the world -- and you have got the leadership that knows how to do it, all I can say, ladies and gentlemen, is why change that leadership in November? And I don't think the American people are going to.

Thank you very much.

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AT 10:20 P.M. EDT