

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 20, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY  
(Kansas City, Missouri)

---

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE BREAKFAST

THE MUEHLEBACH HOTEL

8:40 A.M. CDT

Ray, Bob, Elizabeth, all the wonderful people here from the National Committee:

I talked a little long last night and I have to save my voice for Russell, Kansas. (Laughter) But, I did want to say a few things. Ray was mentioning some of our past relationships with the National Committee, and Ray became National Chairman in 1965.

We went through some real tough times rebuilding in 1965-1966 and because we all stuck together and worked together, we came back magnificently in 1966 and laid the groundwork and the success of 1968. As Bob was speaking, I couldn't help but reminisce a bit in my mind.

Back in January of 1965 I had the audacity to challenge for the Republican leadership -- and I can recall Bob coming in with three other very important and influential Members of the House of Representatives from Kansas -- and I did my utmost to sell them on why I should be the Minority Leader. They went out. No commitment. They are pretty cozy negotiators. (Laughter)

But anyhow, the next day or two we had the vote and I won by the landslide margin of 73 to 67. Ever since then Dole has been saying Kansas did it. (Laughter)

But then that also was a very distinct part of the movement that we have followed in trying to rebuild the party and to make it the kind of a party that not only holds the White House, but holds the City Hall, the Court House, the State House and the Congress of the United States.

We had a tough process, as all of you know, in going through the day-to-day operations. I was very pleased to have an opportunity to meet a number of you who served on the Rules Committee or the Platform Committee. I was just overwhelmed by the tremendous warmth and reception of last night.

MORE

I think we have conducted ourselves here in Kansas City in a suspicious way. The impression the American people have will be that of a party that is able to compete, able to work out responsibly and properly compromises that are needed and necessary.

We can act like real zealots but also great Americans. I think we ought to take a look at some of the things the National Committee can do between now and 1980 and let me assure you, Ray, and Mary Louise, my past interest in and support for the National Committee will not fade away. It is going to be there because I know how important, how vital each of you are and what all of you do.

But, I think as we look down the road to 1980, some of the things that came up during this past week, the procedures that can be followed, the way things can be done ought to be looked at.

Now, I know very vividly how things went on 16-C. (Laughter) But, I happen to believe that there is a considerable amount of merit to that approach if we go through the process in the right way, and I believe that the National Committee ought to take a hard look at it and perhaps lay the groundwork for 1980.

All I am saying is we cannot do everything in the future the way we have done them in the past because things change and we as a party and we as individuals and we as candidates have to meet the challenge for tomorrow if we are going to win tomorrow, and that is what we are going to do.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 8:45 A.M. CDT)