

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 1976

Office of the Vice President
(Cleveland, Ohio)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE OPENING CEREMONIES
PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS
1512 EUCLID AVENUE
CLEVELAND, OHIO

AT 9:44 A.M. EDT

Thank you. Bob Taft, your Honor, distinguished political leaders and officeholders standing here, and friends:

Believe me, this is an honor and pleasure for me to be back in Cleveland. I do have nostalgic ties here, and I am grateful to you. If it hadn't been for you, I probably wouldn't be here. So I am especially grateful.

Just a word about Bob Taft, because he was good enough to introduce me and say such kind things. You need Bob Taft back in the Senate of the United States because of what he is doing for Ohio, for Cleveland. But we need him for what he is doing for America. And I want to tell you, that is tremendously important.

(Applause)

Sometimes we forget that there is virtually no one in the rest of the world who wouldn't give almost anything to live in America. We have had lots of problems, and we know it. We have got lots of worries, but we don't realize how other people see us. They want to be here in the United States. And I don't blame them, because it is a free country, with all of the problems.

(Applause)

And the great strength is freedom and human dignity and equality of opportunity. Maybe we haven't achieved all of those, but those are our goals, and we are getting closer and closer.

That is the closest thing to President Ford's heart, those basic goals, and Bob Taft understands those. And you can't preserve freedom in the world where there is a conflict of ideologies and where you have a relentless effort to take over a free society, to destroy it -- you can't do it without strength. And I just want to say about Bob, he understands that -- both internal strength in the sense of the vitality of our economy, employment for individuals so that they can do for their families and meet their responsibilities, have good education for their children and the opportunity of building a home. Those are the things America wants. Those are the things we have as no other country has.

Some haven't gotten them yet, but we want to see that they get them. That is what Bob is working for. But

MORE

SEP 29 2 43 PM '76
RECEIVED
GSA

he also knows you have got to have a strong defense to be able to protect this country.

(Applause)

In the last eight years the Democratic majorities have cut \$40 billion from Republican recommendations for our defense. And the Soviets are moving at a rate that is unbelievable. Now, there is a gentleman named Mr. Metzenbaum -- the Democratic platform recommends a \$7 billion cut from the budget, but Mr. Metzenbaum, if he got back, would cut it \$15 billion.

I want to tell you, this could make the difference, ladies and gentlemen, in our ability to preserve the right for each one of us to seek the opportunities which this country affords.

I just want to mention that so when you are thinking in that booth about Bob Taft, just remember that everything else we have depends on our ability to preserve these values from outside attack. So I think that is a fundamental. I just want to mention that about Bob.

Now, as far as President Ford is concerned, he didn't seek the office. He was a Congressman, outstanding American, devoted his life to this country, loves this country, believes in the basic values that made America what it is -- a man who understands people, who loves people, who works for people.

All of a sudden he finds himself selected as Vice President, and then the next thing, he is President. And in a moment of Constitutional crisis, growing out of the tragedy of Viet Nam and Watergate, he finds himself faced with inflation, recession, depression, unemployment, loss of respect around the world because of the tragedy of the way in which the Viet Nam war ended.

This man's concern is people. He knows that inflation is the most serious problem that can undermine those who can least afford it, those on pensions, those retired, those on fixed salaries. Every cent counts, and every increase in one point of inflation eats into their buying power. So he made it number one to stop inflation.

Sure there are lots of things we would like to do. It is the popular thing to do to spend money. This country has over-promised and under-delivered for years in all levels of government. He won't do that.

(Applause)

He had to have the courage to veto these attractive spending measures, because every time you vote more money in this two-to-one Democratic Congress, you are just feeding the fires of inflation, taking it out of the pockets of the people, pretending you are giving it to them. So he had the courage.

And I watched him hour after hour, trying to find out what the right thing to do was and then doing it

and making the unpopular decision of vetoing a popular measure because he knew in the long run it was best for the American people. That is the kind of man we need, who has got the courage and the dedication in this country.

(Applause)

He knew we had to focus on the problems of our economy. He believes in the American enterprise system. He knows this country was built by you people, your own imagination, your initiative. It wasn't built by government; it was built by people. And the people have got to have a chance; the government cannot overwhelm them. Therefore, he has tried to encourage the forces of creativity and the opportunity for good jobs through the expansion of our economy.

Now, again, it is much more popular to say, somebody is unemployed; therefore, we are going to get them a job. Even if it is raking leaves, it will take care of them. And it sounds good, but what people want is jobs in industry in an expanding, growing America.

The only reason we are what we are today is because we have been growing. We have got faith in ourselves and faith in this great country. It is the greatest country in the world. We want to keep it that way. I am here because I love America.

(Applause)

That is why he is doing what he is doing. That took courage, too, because he understood, and then he vetoes these measures.

But what has happened? Inflation has gone from 12 percent down to 6 percent. Sure, 6 percent is too high. On the other hand, you have got certain things you have got to do. So he has balanced that. But at the same time, the economists said you couldn't cut inflation and get up employment at the same time. He has done both.

In the last 18 months there are almost four million new jobs in this country. Sure, I know there are lots of people still unemployed, and maybe some in this group here. And we want to see everybody have that opportunity. But the country has got to grow to do it, and you cannot do it by sleight of hand or promises.

We are so tired of promises that have not been fulfilled, and you hear them every day in this campaign. We want solid stuff. And I know that when you and the rest of us get in that booth, we are going to vote for the person we trust, that we are going to want to use the next four years for their situations at home and abroad.

So I have to say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that in my opinion the majority of the voters are going to get in that booth -- no matter what they say in the polls -- and they are going to say, "I think Ford is our man." He believes in America, he loves America, he has got the courage.

MORE

(Applause)

I want to tell you, he has got in Bob Dole one hell of a guy.

Excuse me; I have a little trouble with my language and some other things. I am trying to concentrate on the --

(Laughter)

That saved me. But, anyhow, you get frustrated in this world. Anyhow, excuse me.

(Laughter, applause)

This guy Bob Dole is one terrific fellow. He has been at the local level, he has been a State Senator, a Congressman, a Senator. He spent five-and-a-half years in the war. He lost one arm. He is a war hero. He loves this country. He is eloquent and he has got a sense of humor. On top of that, he has got a brilliant and beautiful wife. What more could you ask for?

(Applause)

And she is a member of the Federal Trade Commission, so you get two for one.

(Laughter)

But you have to think, let's face it, God forbid, something might happen. And so the Vice President, while, you know, nobody pays attention and so forth -- I know -- something might happen and all of a sudden he wakes up tomorrow and he's President. So you have got to be a little careful who you pick for Vice President.

This fellow Dole is a great guy. He can do it. He has got the patience, the intelligence, experience. He has got the integrity. And I must say, what we need of people is integrity, that you can trust, that care and love this country and care about them. And you are going to vote for this guy.

(Applause)

And I agree with Bob -- I don't know what is going to happen in the debates, but if you just let this other side talk, -- I tell you, I never thought I would live to see the day when you discuss Christ's teachings in Playboy. That has got to be something.

(Applause)

And I am a Baptist, ladies and gentlemen. I am telling you, that is true. But I was brought up with "Judge not, that ye be not judged." That is one of His statements. And "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." So I think if he just left it there, we would all have understood it and we would have felt better.

I don't believe in criticizing or making any comments. I am just a believer in President Ford and Bob Dole. And I want to tell you, we are lucky. And we are lucky that you have got a great mayor -- not only a great mayor, but a handsome mayor.

(Applause)

Every time I come here I see him go in his office. He has got a nice office, too. It makes the Vice President's office look kind of cheap.

(Laughter)

But every time I come here and see him, I feel better. And every time I sit in the Senate and watch Bob and see the kind of responsibility he has -- this guy cares. That is what counts. We want people that love and understand human beings, believe in human dignity, love this country, want to defend this country. Let's stick with what we have got, ladies and gentlemen. And I think that is what is going to happen.

(Applause)

Best of luck.

(Applause)

END

(AT 9:58 A.M. EDT)