

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 16, 1974

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE LUNCHEON

MAYFLOWER HOTEL

12:13 P.M. EDT

Thank you very much, Nelson, Mary Louise, Dick, George, Senator Bill Brock, Congressman Bob Michel, members of the National Republican Committee, members of the Finance Committee, and others.

It is really a great privilege and a high honor to have the opportunity of participating with all of you on this fine occasion.

At the outset, let me congratulate Mary Louise on being unanimously selected this morning. That is a lot better than I did before the Congress, and I suspect it might be a little better than what Nelson will do. (Laughter)

I also wish to congratulate all of you on the selection of Dick Obenshain. As Nelson said, it reflects in this team the recognition that we wish to give as a political party to the women throughout the country who over the years have done as much, if not more, to make our political system work by working in the grass roots, unselfishly dedicating themselves to the necessary efforts that had to be made the length and the breadth of our country.

And Mary Louise, I am positive you will both end up being an outstanding Chairman of the Republican National Committee.

We have been a long time working on trying to make the Republican Party a viable, effective party in all fifty States. When I came to the Congress 26 years ago, the Republican Party was practically prohibited from having an impact politically in a number of our States in the South.

Patiently, constructively, and effectively, today the Republican Party is viable. It is constructive in every one of our fifty States. And the Republican Party can only expand and broaden that total effort by making certain that the voices in that area of our country are heard, and heard at the highest level.

MORE

In Dick Obenshain we have a man who will represent that overall viewpoint and represent it well, as he has in the State of Virginia, where now we have a second Republican Governor elected, one after another, where we now have more Republican Congressmen on our side of the aisle than the opposition does on their side of the aisle.

We want this kind of effort made in every State, and Mary Louise and Dick, in my judgment, make that kind of a team.

But let me say, speaking of a team, I believe that Nelson Rockefeller and myself will make a good team, reflecting your views and the views of the Republicans and independents, and I trust a good many Democrats, in trying to head the Executive branch of the Government.

At the time I made the announcement of Nelson's selection, I said I picked a strong man for a tough job. And I am even more convinced today that his selection is in the best interest of this country, and he will be a great person.

The Governor is going to be given plenty of work to do politically, within the Executive branch of the Government, in the field of domestic as well as foreign policy, and it is a pleasure for me to see the way it has all worked so far, and I am sure this team will do the best job we possibly can in the months ahead, primarily for the country but also reflecting our political philosophy.

May I say also that the White House at the present time has in my judgment one of the finest members of the White House team to concentrate exclusively on the problems relating to politics. Dean Burch, a Counsellor with Cabinet status, is in charge of the White House political activities and relationships.

A former Chairman of the National Committee, an outstanding and long dedicated Republican, a person who performed superbly on the Federal Communications Commission; I think we are lucky to have Dean, and if you have any political problems, talk to Dean. He has an open door to my office and always will.

MORE

Dean has an assistant, one of you from the Republican National Committee, and here I speak of Gwen Anderson, who was my political adviser while I was Vice President.

So again, in Dean, from the great State of Arizona, and Gwen, from the great State of Washington, they make a broad and effective Republican organization, operating in the White House.

Now, we all hate to say goodbye to George Bush, our new U.S. representative to the People's Republic of China. George, as all of you know, was a hard campaigner when he was first campaigning for the House of Representatives. He served extremely well in the House. He was a strong representative of our Government at the United Nations. He has been, I think, an excellent National Chairman in a most difficult time.

And so, with all that background, with all the wonderful personality and talent that he has, along with Barbara, our country will be extremely well represented in the People's Republic of China, and I just know they will enjoy it and do an extremely good job for all of us in that great responsibility.

A few months ago, when Ray Bliss asked me to come out to make a speech in Chicago to a regional gathering of Republicans, I went and made some remarks that I won't dwell on this morning, but I would like to say that what I said there is the criteria by which we will meet the campaign problems of 1976. The campaign will be in the hands of the Republican National Committee.

But that is all I am going to say about 1976 because we have a more important job in 1974.

MORE

A few months ago there were dire predictions about the fate of the Republican candidates from Governor down to local offices, from candidates for the United States Senate, candidates for the House of Representatives in the Federal Congress.

I can remember some great predictions by some of our adversaries who said we were going to have a net loss of 100 or a net loss of 50 and there was great glee on the part of some of our adversaries that they were going to have a veto-proof Congress.

Well, we took on that challenge and we pointed out what a veto-proof Congress would mean. It would mean a Congress that would spend more and more -- and I repeatedly alerted people around the country that if we had a veto-proof Congress they better tighten their seat belts because they were going right through the sky in spending. They backed off from that, and we on the other side, I think, have coined a better campaign slogan because it involves our number one public enemy domestically, inflation.

What we want to elect to Congress, Senators and Members of the House, is an inflation-proof Congress, and we will get it with Republican candidates.

And I am quite frank to tell you that those Members of Congress who support our effort to win the battle against inflation will get my wholehearted endorsement.

But we need strong and tall candidates who will stand up and fight the battle of inflation in fiscal policy and in any other of those policies that involve saving this country from the ravages of inflation.

So urge your incumbents who are running for reelection, urge your candidates who are seeking the high office of the Congress, to campaign, to vote for economy, for strength in our battle against inflation.

You can have a big impact. Your influence can be significant and we have got some tough votes coming up right soon in the Senate and in the House. Let them hear from you, that you want them to vote for economy, to hold down the lid.

And if we win some of these battles -- and I hope we can -- with the help of Republicans, the help of a necessary number of Democrats, then I think we will have defeated our public enemy number one.

MORE

But there are some other issues which I think we can affirmatively talk about. We can honestly say that we have turned a great deal of the power that was accumulating in Washington away and sent it back to our local units of Government, to our States.

We have revenue sharing. It is a most important part of new Federalism. I can remember five, six, seven years ago, maybe longer, talking to Nelson Rockefeller when he was Governor, working with him when he was active in the Governors' Conference.

I can recall vividly working with Bill Brock and Bob Michel and other Members of Congress on trying to get the Congress to undertake a general revenue sharing program.

It is now law. It is about halfway through. Approximately \$16 billion of Federal money has gone back to States and local units of Government so that they can establish at the local or State level that priorities that vary from New York to California, or Michigan to Florida, or communities in one State or another, have totally different problems.

And this vast amount of Federal money going without restriction for decision-making at the local and State levels I think is a great achievement for a Republican Administration. And this Administration is going to continue it.

We want the legislation extended so that this effort will get even stronger in the months ahead.

So I think we can take credit as Republicans for a program that is very meaningful and very substantial. But there are other things that have to be done and they involve the area of foreign policy.

I always said and I believed then that America and the world was fortunate to have a great statesman in Henry Kissinger as our Secretary of State. And I have learned to an even greater degree how effective, how able, what a great teammate he is as he and I work on the problems involving peace throughout the world.

We have peace at the present time. We have peace for several reasons. One, we have peace because the United States is strong militarily. And we are not going to weaken our national security, despite the pressure from some sources.

MORE

Peace is related to strength. Weakness inevitably brings on war. History tells us that story.

In the interim while we are keeping strong, we are going to make conscientious efforts to negotiate with the Soviet Union, broadening our detente, seeking to make our total effort one of negotiations, not necessarily confrontation.

We are going to be working intimately with the problems of the Middle East, trying to move forward the successful efforts of disengagement which took place last fall.

MORE

We will concentrate in seeking to obtain a just and durable peace in that very difficult area of the world, but that is not the only area where we must concentrate. The Pacific, where over a period of about 18 years almost 60,000 Americans lost their lives, that was a great sacrifice, a sacrifice for an objective that many Administrations, not just one, felt was in the best interest of the United States and the world at large.

We cannot afford to throw away the sacrifices of those people. So, we must maintain our own strength and help our allies who are trying to retain the gains that were made in Vietnam and elsewhere in the Pacific.

We have the problem of Western Europe. The key to peace in the minds of many is the strengthening of NATO. We are working to keep better cooperation, stronger military and economic policies moving ahead.

I am encouraged, and we are going to be meeting from time to time, Secretary Kissinger and others, with those who can have a meaningful impact on the NATO organization, keeping it strong militarily, economically, diplomatically, and otherwise.

When you look at the other areas, Latin America, we are not going to neglect Latin America. We are going to work for greater cooperation there, and the activities of Dr. Kissinger in this area in the last five or six months have been significant.

We are not going to neglect Africa. We have and we will continue to work with those nations in that area of the world.

So, anyplace you go, our broad policy of global peace will get our first and top attention because if we are going to keep peace, we can solve more easily our problems at home.

As I close, let me just thank all of you for the wonderful job you did in endorsing Mary Louise and Dick. Let me thank George for his tireless efforts, effective ones, and let me thank the Republican leadership in the House, Hugh Scott, John Rhodes, and their associates, and let me express to my staff that have been so helpful to me that I am grateful and we are moving, and we are going to move with the Republican workers throughout the country. It is vital for us to carry our banner high, because I think we can do a great job for the country as a whole.

Thank you very kindly.

END (AT 12:33 P.M. EDT)