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New York Metropolitan Area Baptist Conference Speech: Version 2

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Medley / Rideout
version
NOT USED

NY METROPOLITAN AREA BAPTIST CONFERENCE -- HARLEM, N.Y.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1984

THANK YOU, REVEREND BURSON, FOR YOUR GRACIOUS INTRODUCTION.

I AM HONORED TO STAND AT THE PULPIT WHERE REVEREND M.L. WILSON ONCE PREACHED. REVEREND WILSON DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO MAKING EQUALITY AND JUSTICE TRULY A RIGHT FOR ALL AMERICANS. I ALSO WANT TO THANK REVEREND BURSON, REVEREND GRANT AND EVERY ONE OF YOU HERE, FOR INVITING ME TO ADDRESS THE CONFERENCE TODAY. AND I WANT TO CONGRATULATE REVEREND GARDNER, AND WISH HIM LUCK IN HIS NEW POSITION.

LET ME SAY I'M TRULY EXCITED TO BE HERE TODAY, AND I'M PROUD TO TALK TO A GROUP THAT REPRESENTS THE VERY BEST OF THIS NATION'S SPIRIT AND DEVOTION. BECAUSE OF YOUR EFFORTS, THIS CITY HAS LEARNED THAT THE WAY TO JUSTICE IS THROUGH PARTICIPATION; THE WAY TO SUCCESS IS THROUGH HARD WORK, AND THE WAY TO EQUALITY IS THROUGH COMPASSION.

I SAY YOUR WORK TO FEED THIS CITY'S SENIOR CITIZENS AND HOMELESS, TO RESCUE THIS CITY'S YOUTHS FROM THE DANGERS OF DRUG ADDICTION, AND TO INVOLVE YOUR COMMUNITIES IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS ARE BEARING FRUIT. AND YOUR SUCCESSES ARE BEING WATCHED.

THIS YEAR YOU HAVE HELPED REGISTER THOUSANDS OF NEW VOTERS. AND BECAUSE OF YOU, WHERE THERE ONCE WAS FRUSTRATION, THERE IS NOW A WAY TO BE HEARD. WHERE THERE ONCE WAS SILENCE, THERE IS NOW A VOICE FOR PROGRESS. WHERE THERE ONCE WAS DESPAIR, THERE IS NOW A RAY OF HOPE. AND ONCE THEY VOTE, WE WILL ALL BE STRONGER.

SOME PEOPLE THINK THAT DEBATES DON'T MATTER. MR. BUSH'S CAMPAIGN AIDE JUST SAID, (QUOTE) "YOU CAN SAY ANYTHING YOU WANT DURING A DEBATE, AND 80 MILLION PEOPLE HEAR IT." WHEN ASKED WHAT HAPPENS IF MISSTATEMENTS ARE CORRECTED LATER IN NEWSPAPERS, HE REPLIED, (QUOTE) "SO WHAT? MAYBE TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE READ IT, OR TWO THOUSAND, OR TWENTY THOUSAND."

THAT CYNICAL OUTLOOK OF FOOLING MOST OF THE PEOPLE MOST OF THE TIME MUST BE THE OPERATING PRINCIPLE OF MR. REAGAN AND MR. BUSH. BECAUSE IF YOU LOOK AT THEIR PERFORMANCE IN THE LAST THREE DEBATES, THE TRANSCRIPT IS LITTERED WITH MISSTATEMENTS.

IN THE FIRST DEBATE, MR. REAGAN SAID DEFICITS DON'T CAUSE HIGH INTEREST RATES -- WHEN THEY DO. HE SAID HE HADN'T REDUCED HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR THE ELDERLY -- WHEN HE HAD. AND HE SAID THE RATE OF INCREASE IN POVERTY HAS DROPPED -- WHEN IN FACT IT HAS⁹ RISEN.

IN THE SECOND DEBATE, MR. BUSH SAID REAL INTEREST RATES DON'T MATTER -- WHEN THEY DO. HE SAID SPENDING FOR THE NEEDY IS UP -- WHEN IT'S DOWN. AND HE SAID THAT HIS ADMINISTRATION HAD SUPPORTED THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT EXTENSION -- WHEN IN FACT THEY DRAGGED THEIR FEET ON THAT MEASURE.

LAST NIGHT, THEY WERE AT IT AGAIN. FIRST RONALD REAGAN SAID A CIA AGENT IN NICARAGUA REVIEWED THE DOCUMENT WHICH ADVOCATED ASSASSINATION. THEN HE SAID THERE WAS NO CIA AGENT IN NICARAGUA. BUT WHEREVER THE AGENT WAS, AMERICA WAS STUNNED TO LEARN THAT THE CIA HAS WRITTEN AND IS CIRCULATING IN NICARAGUA A MANUAL THAT TEACHES ASSASSINATION, TERROR, BLACKMAIL, KIDNAPPING, AND MOB VIOLENCE. IT IS WRITTEN MORE IN THE SPIRIT OF STALIN THAN JEFFERSON. IT READS LIKE MAO, NOT LINCOLN. IT BEFITS A DICTATORSHIP, NOT A DEMOCRACY. IT'S AN INSULT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

MOREOVER, ANYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT REFINING THE MURDER TECHNIQUES OF CENTRAL AMERICANS WILL ADVANCE OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS IS GRAVELY MISTAKEN. IN OUR OWN SELF INTEREST, WE SHOULD BE BUILDING ECONOMIES, NOT MINING HARBORS. WE HAVE TO STOP THE COVERT WAR IN NICARAGUA.

THEN, RONALD REAGAN SAID HE HAD A GOOD RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS. WELL, LET'S LISTEN TO WHAT THIS YEAR'S NOBEL PRIZE WINNER, BISHOP TUTU OF SOUTH AFRICA, HAD TO SAY ABOUT THIS ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY: (QUOTE) "THE NAME OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY WAS MUD," BECAUSE OF OUR SUPPORT FOR A SYSTEM THAT HAS BROUGHT, (QUOTE) "UNTOLD MISERY TO SO MANY OF GOD'S CHILDREN."

WHEN WALTER MONDALE WAS VICE PRESIDENT HE WENT TO THE PHILIPPINES AND PRESSURED THAT REPRESSIVE GOVERNMENT FOR POLITICAL FREEDOM. BUT WHEN GEORGE BUSH -- THE EXPERT -- WENT TO THAT COUNTRY AS VICE PRESIDENT, HE IGNORED THEIR RECENT HISTORY OF MARTIAL LAW AND ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT OF DISSIDENTS, AND HE TOASTED PRESIDENT MARCOS BY SAYING, (QUOTE) "WE LOVE YOUR ADHERENCE TO DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPALS, AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES."

WHEN WALTER MONDALE WAS VICE PRESIDENT, HE WENT TO VIENNA AND PRESSURED SOUTH AFRICAN PREMIER VORSTER TO END THE RACIST SYSTEM OF APARTHEID IN THAT TRAGIC COUNTRY. BUT THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS COZIED UP TO THAT RACIST SYSTEM OF APARTHEID, AND I SAY IT'S TIME TO TURN THE TABLES ON SOUTH AFRICA.

° WALTER MONDALE AND I WILL PUT THE HEAT ON SOUTH AFRICA, AND LET THEM KNOW APARTHEID MUST END. WE WILL PRESS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS NOT ONLY IN THE SOVIET UNION BUT ALSO IN THE PHILIPPINES AND SOUTH AFRICA.

FINALLY, RONALD REAGAN SAID WE SHOULD LAUNCH AN ARMS RACE IN SPACE. HE SAID WE SHOULD SPEND A TRILLION DOLLARS IN SEARCH OF A STAR WARS WEAPONS SYSTEM TO PROTECT OURSELVES. THIS WOULD BE THE MOST EXPENSIVE AND SENSITIVE WEAPON EVER BUILT. AFTER WE BUILD IT, RONALD REAGAN WANTS TO DEMONSTRATE IT TO THE SOVIETS. BUT HOW DO WE DEMONSTRATE A SYSTEM THAT HAS TO KNOCK DOWN EIGHT THOUSAND WEAPONS?

WE DON'T KNOW THAT, BUT WE DO KNOW THAT AFTER WE TEST IT, RONALD REAGAN WANTS US TO GIVE IT TO THE SOVIET UNION. NOW WHAT KIND OF SENSE DOES THAT MAKE?

I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY SAY THINGS IN THESE DEBATES WHICH ARE PLAINLY NOT TRUE, BUT IF THEY KEEP IT UP, I'M PREPARED TO BE A ONE-WOMAN TRUTH SQUAD. PEOPLE WANT TO HEAR THE UNVARNISHED TRUTH, AND THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL GET FROM FRITZ MONDALE AND GERRY FERRARO.

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. THIS CAMPAIGN IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN A CONTEST BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE. IT'S MORE THAN A CAMPAIGN BETWEEN TWO PERSONALITIES. IT'S A CHOICE ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER IN YOUR LIVES AND IN THE LIVES OF YOUR CHILDREN.

LET ME BE CLEAR ABOUT THIS: WALTER MONDALE AND I ARE ON YOUR SIDE. WE BELIEVE IN CIVIL RIGHTS. AND WE STAND ON A RECORD OF COMMITMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT TO PROVE IT.

WHEN WALTER MONDALE WAS IN THE SENATE, HE HELPED WRITE THE FAIR HOUSING ACT OF 1968. HE HELPED PASS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT. HE WAS A FIGHTER FOR HEAD START. HE LED THE BATTLE FOR THE INDEPENDENT LEGAL SERVICES THAT BRING JUSTICE TO EVERY AMERICAN. HE INVESTIGATED THE PLIGHT OF MIGRANT WORKERS. AND HE WROTE LANDMARK DAY-CARE LEGISLATION.

NAME A DECENT CAUSE, AND FRITZ MONDALE HAS BEEN THERE, FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE. WHEN MOSES LED HIS PEOPLE ACROSS THE RED SEA, AND OUT OF BONDAGE, NO ONE ASKED WHO WAS THE FIRST TO CROSS, BUT WHETHER THE LAST ONES WERE SAFE. AMERICA HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE PROMISED LAND. AND IT'S TIME FOR ALL OF US TO CROSS OVER.

AS THE REVEREND MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SAID, WE WILL NOT BE SATISFIED, (QUOTE) "UNTIL JUSTICE ROLLS DOWN LIKE WATERS, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE THE MIGHTY STREAM."

WITH DOCTOR KING, LET'S DECLARE FINALLY THAT PEOPLE SHOULD BE JUDGED NOT BY THE COLOR OF THEIR SKIN, BUT BY THE CONTENT OF THEIR CHARACTER.

• WITH DOCTOR KING, LET'S SAY WE FACE AN ADVERSARY, BUT WE HAVE FACED ADVESARIES BEFORE, AND THIS ONE TOO WE SHALL OVERCOME.

WALTER MONDALE AND I SUPPORT CIVIL RIGHTS, NOT SEGREGATED ACADEMIES.

WALTER MONDALE AND I BELIEVE IN JOBS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED. WE DON'T BLAME WORKERS FOR BEING UNEMPLOYED, THE WAY THIS PRESIDENT DOES. WE BLAME THIS PRESIDENT.

WALTER MONDALE AND I BELIEVE IN EDUCATION. RONALD REAGAN WANTS TO LAUNCH A TEACHER INTO SPACE. BUT WE SAY WE SHOULD INVEST IN OUR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS HERE ON EARTH.

WALTER MONDALE AND I BELIEVE IN THE ELDERLY. TO PROTECT THEM, LET'S HAVE RONALD REAGAN COLLECTING SOCIAL SECURITY IN CALIFORNIA, INSTEAD OF CUTTING IT IN WASHINGTON.

WE'RE IN A FIGHT FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T MAKE IT ON THEIR OWN. RONALD REAGAN SAYS THE HOMELESS LIKE LIVING ON THE STREETS. WALTER MONDALE WANTS TO HELP THEM FIND SHELTER.

WE'RE IN A FIGHT FOR THE HUNGRY. THIS ADMINISTRATION SAYS THERE IS NO HUNGER IN AMERICA. WALTER MONDALE WANTS TO INVEST MORE IN THE HUMAN RACE AND LESS IN THE ARMS RACE.

AND WE'RE IN A FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WE MUST STAND FOR THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE ABROAD BECAUSE, AS REVEREND MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. KNEW, (QUOTE) "INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE."

THE TIME TO BEGIN THAT FIGHT IS NOT LATER -- IT'S NOW.

THE TIME TO GO TO WORK FOR OUR FUTURE IS NOT LATER -- IT'S NOW.

THE TIME FOR A RE-BIRTH OF JUSTICE IS NOT LATER -- IT'S NOW.

AND THE TIME TO ELECT WALTER MONDALE PRESIDENT AND GERRY FERRARO VICE-PRESIDENT IS NOT LATER -- IT'S NOW.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

-- END --