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Eugene Rally Speech

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FINAL DRAFT

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON -- EUGENE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1984

Thank you, Jim, for that terrific introduction. He's not only a wonderful speaker, he's a great Congressman. I'm also delighted to see Marghee Hendriksen here today -- an outstanding candidate who will help bring the U.S. Senate back to our party.

And I also know you're already in the middle of your midterms. You've studied hard, so I think I'll give you a little pop quiz.

Are we going to win in November?

Are we going to send Walter Mondale to the White House and Ronald Reagan back to his ranch?

You bet we are.

You know, Ronald Reagan and George Bush have both said this election presents voters with their clearest choice in fifty years, and -- for once -- they're right.

This election will decide our future in many ways. But in two ways above all. First, this is a referendum on the future of

our economy.

Walter Mondale has a plan to reduce the federal budget deficits, cut interest rates, and stem the flow of foreign imports. Ronald Reagan has no plan to cut the deficits, thinks current interest rates are just fine, and he's happy to make American jobs our chief export.

Let's be clear about this: trade means jobs. This President tells the unemployed to check the want ads. The problem is, the unemployed don't get all those foreign newspapers where their jobs are now being advertised.

He not only doesn't understand the problem, I'm not sure he even cares about it. The students of Eugene care about the loggers of Coos Bay. The people of this state who are already employed care about their fellow citizens who are not so lucky. This is not a selfish country. Americans are a caring and generous people, and we demand an equally caring and generous President.

And let me add, those regions of the country which are on the cutting edge of industrial change must also care about those regions which rely on basic industries. If compassion doesn't tell us that, our own self-interest does. The largest market for equipment and high technology is American manufacturing.

Let's remember: this is one nation, not two. As we face a more competitive future, we're in this together, not each person for him or herself. Our own self-interest reminds us that the sunbelt cannot forsake the frostbelt, and high tech cannot forget smokestack. In my book, it's not a complete economic recovery until workers have recovered their jobs. America is not back and standing tall until the loggers of Oregon, the steelworkers of Ohio, and the farmers of our country are also standing tall.

Second, this election will decide the chances for peace. There is no greater threat to peace today than the nuclear arms race. Walter Mondale and I want to stop that arms race, we want to negotiate a mutual, verifiable freeze.

Mr. Reagan is the first President since Herbert Hoover not to meet with his Soviet counterpart. He's the first President since the dawn of the nuclear age not to negotiate an arms control agreement. He has broken a forty year bi-partisan national commitment to arms control.

It was not a Democrat, it was the Republican President, Dwight Eisenhower, who once said this about the arms race: "The worst to be feared, and the best to be expected can be simply stated. The worst is atomic war. The best would be this: a life of perpetual fear and tension; a burden of arms draining the

wealth and labor of all people. Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed."

No one would ever question General Eisenhower's commitment to a strong defense. And he understood that nothing threatens our safety more than an uncontrolled arms race.

I agree completely with President Eisenhower. I want the United States to stop spending so much on the arms race and start investing more in the human race.

Instead of that, Mr. Reagan wants to launch the arms race into space. Even if his Star Wars plan could intercept 99.7 percent of incoming warheads, 25 thermonuclear warheads would still get through. And the largest 25 American cities contain more than 100 million Americans. In my book, that's not much of a defense.

Last Sunday night he proposed giving that Star Wars system to the Soviet Union. Now that makes a lot of sense. We won't sell ordinary commercial computers to the Soviets, and the President wants to hand over to them our most sensitive, expensive military technology.

Let's say, enough is enough. The sky is the limit. Instead of sending the arms race into space, let's pick a President who will stop it here on earth.

Controlling nuclear weapons is the most important -- but not the only -- key to a safer world. Our security also calls for supporting human rights.

But this Administration doesn't understand that basic connection. In his last debate, Ronald Reagan said the only opposition to Marcos in the Philippines was communism. The State Department corrected him the next day. But the damage had already been done. With a single statement, President Reagan has encouraged Marcos to continue his abuse of human rights and he has helped poison our relations with the people of the Philippines.

Liste to what a leading Filipino businessman is quoted as saying in today's newspaper: "We run the risk of being incinerated by a Soviet missile attack to defend your desocracy, while your government supports a regime which makes a mockery of our democracy."

That sentiment undermines our long-term security. I want a President who understands the effect of his own words. I want a President who knows that when we stand for human rights we

strengthen this country. I want an Administration who stops toasting dictators and starts working for democracy.

I can remember when the American government was known to the rest of the world as the leading force for human values. I can remember when John F. Kennedy launched the Peace Corps, when Hubert Humphrey started Food for Peace, and when jimmy Carter stood up for Human Rights.

I want us to stand for those values again. Last Tuesday, our government abstained on a security council vote condemning apartheid and oppression of political dissent in South Africa. Imagine how that looks to the rest of the world. The Untied States was the only nation to abstain on that vote -- only a few days after the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Bishop Tutu, a leading South African opponent of apartheid.

I want a President who will fight for human rgiths and tell the South A?frican government that the racist system of apartheid must finally end.

There is a choice this year. Not only on the issue of war and peace, but in domestic policy as well.

We're in a fight for the elderly. Let's not let anyone lay a finger on Social Security. It's a contract. People depend on

it. And we should defend it.

We're in a fight for personal freedom. We want the next Supreme Court chosen by Walter Mondale, not Jerry Falwell.

We're in a fight to preserve our environment, and clean up toxic dumps. I want a President who will take polluters to court, not to lunch.

We're in a fight for social justice. I want a President who supports civil rights, not segregated academies.

We're in a fight for peace. Simply stated, I want a President who will stop the covert war in Nicaragua.

We're in a fight for equal opportunity. When I take the oath of office for my second term as Vice President, I want to swear to uphold a Constitution that includes the Equal Rights Amendment.

Make no mistake about it. We're in a fight for the heart and soul of this country. Make no mistake: as Democrats, we're going to win that fight.

I can read the polls. And I've heard the reporters' questions. They say, how can you win this race?

Well, let me tell you my answer. I believe that you, the people here today, care about peace. You care about arms control. You care about the environment. You care about personal freedom. And I know that because you care, on November 6th, by teh hundreds, by the thousands, and by the millions, you're going to turn out adn vote for a better future by voting for Walter Mondale.

You are enrolled in this school because you want to learn. And you don't want to just learn facts: you're learning how to think. When you go into the polling booth, think what you're doing.

If you pull that lever for Reagan, you're voting to continue the arms race. You're voting for the covert war in Nicaragua. You're voting fo rselling off our natural beauty to the highest bidder. You're voting for discrimination against women. you're voting to cut your own student loans. You're voting to cut your grandarents Medicare. You're voting for government intrusion in your personal and religious life.

Think about what you're doing on election day. I know what I'm doing. I'm voting for our future. For my children, and for my children's children.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Eugene, OR
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