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Santa Ana Reception Speech

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THANK YOU FOR THAT VERY KIND INTRODUCTION.

I'M DELIGHTED TO BE IN SANTA ANA. AS YOU KNOW, NOT LONG AGO PRESIDENT REAGAN CAME TO ORANGE COUNTY AND SAID THAT THIS WAS THE PLACE WHERE REPUBLICANS COME BEFORE THEY DIE. I SAY, THIS IS THE PLACE DEMOCRATS COME TO GET ELECTED.

I LOVE CALIFORNIA. IT WAS IN THIS STATE WHERE I WAS NOMINATED FOR VICE PRESIDENT. AND IT'S HERE WHERE RONALD REAGAN WILL RETIRE NEXT JANUARY, BECAUSE THIS STATE IS GOING TO VOTE FOR A NEW DIRECTION FOR OUR COUNTRY IN 1984.

WHAT DIRECTION THAT WILL BE DEPENDS ON HOW WE MEET IMPORTANT CHALLENGES, AND TODAY I WANT TO DISCUSS SEVERAL OF THEM.
There is the challenge of combating crime. I used to be a prosecutor in Queens. I have done more than talk about crime: I've put criminals behind bars. I have done more than sympathize with crime victims: I headed the Special Victims Bureau in the D.A.'s office in Queens. No one feels more deeply our need to restore safety to our communities than I do. And to do that, we must step up the war against drug trafficking, give targeted federal assistance to local law enforcement, and reform sentencing procedures.

There is the challenge of protecting ourselves from toxic chemicals. This beautiful state is threatened by 19 Superfund sites, not one of which has been cleaned up. The worst one is the Stringfellow Acid Pits, located not far from here. Right now, the chemicals from that dump are seeping through the ground and threatening an aquifer which supplies drinking water to half a million people. Now, that is unacceptable.

I believe the people of California want a government that cleans up those dump sites, penalizes polluters, and protects our health and safety from toxic chemicals.
There is the challenge of immigration reform. Everyone agrees that something must be done to reform immigration procedures, but it must be done fairly. It must be done in a way that protects the civil rights of all Americans. The approach taken in Simpson-Mazzoli would invite discrimination against Hispanic Americans, and I oppose it. Let's regain control of our borders and never undermine our constitutional rights.

But above all, this election poses the challenge of war and peace. That is the paramount issue in this campaign and of our time. Next to the quest for peace, all other issues pale. Next to that common cause, all our separate agendas must give way.

The question is, which candidate can build a safer world?

Fritz Mondale and I are committed to negotiate with the Soviets and achieve a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze. Ronald Reagan is not.

Ronald Reagan has opposed every nuclear arms control treaty ever negotiated. If John Kennedy had listened to Ronald Reagan, we would not have an atmospheric test ban treaty, and nuclear bombs would still be exploded in the sky.
If Lyndon Johnson had listened to Ronald Reagan, the danger would be greater than it already is that a Khomeini, Quaddafi, or the PLO might get their hands on the bomb.

If Richard Nixon had listened to Ronald Reagan, we would not have an ABM Treaty, and the Soviets would be a bigger threat than they are today.

And if the American people listen to Ronald Reagan now, we will have an arms race in space. I say, if this President can't stop exchanging insults and start exchanging sound proposals to control nuclear weapons, then it's time to exchange this President for one who will.

Arms control is in our own security interests. That's why the Joint Chiefs of Staff have supported every arms control agreement we ever negotiated. They know that mutual, negotiated arms control can enhance our intelligence-gathering through verification. It can limit the number of Soviet missiles aimed at our cities. It can help us plan our defense programs better by improving our forecast of Soviet defenses. And it can save billions we need to spend on conventional forces.

But this President hasn't used arms control to strengthen our security.
There are several reasons why this administration has not moved forward on arms control. First, Mr. Reagan believes he can spend the Soviets into submission -- when we can't; Second, he believes that negotiation is a sign of weakness -- when it's not; I believe that we need a leader with the will to stand up to the Soviets, but I also believe that our leader should have the wisdom to sit down with them and negotiate an end to the arms race.

Third, he believes apparently that nonproliferation, as he put it, is none of our business -- when it is. The spread of nuclear weapons is very much our business -- because survival is our business.

But above all, I think what lies behind their reluctance on arms control is a failure to grasp the magnitude of the problem that confronts us. The arms race is speeding out of control. More than thirteen wars and conflicts are being fought, any one of which could escalate into a big power confrontation.

We face a very dangerous situation, becoming more dangerous all the time. And yet this administration has landed us in an arms control gridlock. They have no conception of the threat we face.
JUST LISTEN TO THE STATEMENTS MADE OVER THE PAST THREE-AND-A-HALF YEARS BY OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR NEGOTIATING ARMS CONTROL.

REAGAN'S FIRST HEAD OF THE ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY WAS ASKED IF EITHER THE U.S. OR THE SOVIET UNION COULD SURVIVE A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE, AND HE REPLIED: 'JAPAN, AFTER ALL, NOT ONLY SURVIVED BUT FLOURISHED AFTER THE NUCLEAR ATTACK.' HE WAS COMPARING THE DEVASTATION CAUSED BY TWO RELATIVELY SMALL BOMBS WITH THE DEVASTATION WHICH WOULD BE CAUSED BY HUNDREDS OF NUCLEAR WARHEADS. AND THAT COMPARISON IS RIDICULOUS.

AND THIS MAN WAS FIRED BY REAGAN FOR BEING TOO MUCH IN FAVOR OF ARMS CONTROL.

THE PRESENT HEAD OF THAT CRUCIAL AGENCY HAD THIS TO SAY ABOUT ARMS CONTROL: 'MY POLICY,' HE SAID, 'WOULD BE TO DO IT FOR POLITICAL REASONS, BUT I THINK IT IS A SHAM ... ONE REASON NOT TO RUSH INTO NEGOTIATIONS IS THAT IN A DEMOCRACY THESE NEGOTIATIONS TEND TO DISCOURAGE MONEY FOR DEFENSE PROGRAMS.' AND HE'S THE ONE WHO TODAY IS CHARGED WITH PROMOTING ARMS CONTROL.
Another Administration official said this about their plans for a protracted nuclear war: "The other thing this Administration has categorically rejected," he said, "is the short-war ... We're trying to inject a long-war mentality."

An Arms Control and Disarmament Agency official said, "Nuclear war is a destructive thing but still in large part a physics problem." I have no idea what he meant by that, but then he went on to say, "It is possible to survive and prevail over the enemy."

A senior Pentagon official said we could survive a nuclear war if we simply took his advice: "Everybody's going to make it if there are enough shovels to go around....Dig a hole, cover it with a couple of doors and then throw three feet of dirt on top. It's the dirt that does it."

A general said this in Congressional testimony: "We should move into war-fighting capabilities -- that is, ground to space war-fighting capabilities, space to space, and space to ground."

As Woody Allen once said, "I'd like to return to planet Earth."
AND THEN THERE IS THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, WHO LAST MONTH,

IN AN UNGUARDED MOMENT: "MY FELLOW AMERICANS, I AM PLEASED

TO TELL YOU I JUST SIGNED LEGISLATION WHICH OUTLAWS RUSSIA

FOREVER. THE BOMBING BEGINS IN FIVE MINUTES."

I DON'T THINK THIS PRESIDENT TAKES SERIOUSLY THE THREAT WE
FACE IN THE ARMS RACE. I DON'T THINK HIS ADMINISTRATION HAS
THE FOGGIEST IDEA WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO REDUCE THE THREAT OF
WAR. THEIR HOSTILITY TO ARMS CONTROL IS DANGEROUS.

THEIR STATEMENTS ARE OUT OF TOUCH WITH REALITY. THEIR
POLICIES ARE OUT OF STEP WITH OUR HISTORY. THEIR INDIFFERENCE TO
THE ARMS RACE IS OUT OF BOUNDS WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. AND
THAT IS A PRINCIPAL REASON I AM CONVINCED THAT ON NOVEMBER 6TH
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL VOTE THEM OUT OF OFFICE.

I ASK YOU TO COMPARE RONALD REAGAN AND WALTER MONDALE ON
ARMS CONTROL. WALTER MONDALE HAS BEEN A LEADER FOR ARMS CONTROL.
HE WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE TO SUPPORT A NUCLEAR
FREEZE. AND TODAY, HE WANTS TO STOP THE ARMS RACE BEFORE IT
FLIES INTO ORBIT.
Fritz Mondale will call on the Soviet leadership on his first day in office, not on the first day of his re-election campaign. He will do everything within his power to negotiate a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze, and then go on to reduce these nuclear stockpiles.

He will also pursue a policy of negotiation, not confrontation, with other nations of the world. Today in Central America we’re militarizing a conflict that could be solved by peaceful means. And we are Americanizing a conflict that is primarily local.

Let’s get something straight about the so-called secret war in Nicaragua. It’s not secret. It’s probably not legal. And it’s certainly not supported by the American people. Fritz Mondale and I will stop the covert war in Nicaragua.

This election is a referendum on many things, domestic as well as foreign policy. It’s a referendum on cleaning up toxic waste dumps. I want a government that takes polluters to court, not to lunch.

It’s a referendum on fairness. I want a tax policy where average families don’t pay more so the rich can pay less.
It’s a referendum on equal opportunity. I want to enforce our civil rights laws, not help segregated academies.

But most of all, it is a referendum on the fate of the earth.

When you go to the polls, I want you to think about Ronald Reagan’s record on arms control. And I want you to ask yourselves: if he has done nothing to stop the arms race in the last four years, when he faced the constraints of re-election, what will he do if he has another four years and feels no such constraints? I don’t think I want to find out.

I don’t know if you will be with us or against us in November. But I do want you to vote. I do want you to listen to the candidates, examine their positions, and weigh the facts. This election truly matters. I have confidence that however you vote, you will take it seriously and vote intelligently.

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