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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
CONVENTION HALL
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

(AS ACTUALLY DELIVERED AT: 8:31 P.M. EST)

Chairman Smith, Governor Lawrence, Mayor Tate, Senator Genevieve Blatt, my old friends Congressman Barrett, Congressman Nix, Congressman Burn, Congressman Toll, and Congressman Bill Green, my old friends Mike Musmanno and Richard Dilworth: A little while ago we arrived at the hotel after one of the largest and the warmest welcomes of this campaign. I went into my room and Frank Smith was with me. When I sat down in a chair there by the window, Frank looked over to me and said, "Mr. President, one year ago tonight at this very same hour, in that very same chair that you are now sitting in sat John Fitzgerald Kennedy." If I may, I want to say a word to you tonight and to all Americans about the role that fate has entrusted to me this year.

For 11 months and one week now, I have borne the torch that passed from the hands of that great and good and gallant President on that tragic November day in 1963. I have traveled more than 100,000 miles into 44 States of this land, and every mile of the way that I have walked, I have walked the path that was opened for us and the path that was pioneered for us by John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

In your great city, and in every city I have seen millions of Americans. I have seen a proud and a prospering and a peaceful people, and I have known that that pride and that prosperity, and, above all, that peace, is what John Fitzgerald Kennedy left to them. Of all that I have done in my life, nothing has given such great pride and satisfaction to me than to stand as I did in the campaign of 1960 by the side of John F. Kennedy. I am proud and I am grateful to have been a part of the campaign which proved forever that in America no man shall be denied the opportunity to serve his countrymen because of the region in which he lives or the religion which he has. Tonight, America is a better and a stronger nation for all of us because of that campaign that we waged in '60. Philadelphia is a city of homes and families, just as all of America is a nation of homes and families, and in the life of such a city and in the life of such a nation, religion has always, and religion must always, play a part in all that we do or all that we hope to do. I hope that the day will never come when any man, for any cause, will try to keep religion out of our national decisions on who shall lead us or the direction we shall go.

Thank God that Americans welcome into their homes and into the lives of their families the preachers and the priests and the rabbis who serve us all so faithfully and so unselfishly. The men of the pulpit have a place in the leadership of our people and they have a place in our public affairs. We should be grateful for their concern over the well being of this land, for that is what America is all about, and that is what brought men to these shores, and particularly to this great State of Pennsylvania.

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I do not condemn our churches or our clergymen for being concerned that America meet her moral responsibilities for peace, for preserving human freedom, and human life, and for doing what a rich nation can and should do to wipe poverty from our land. I not only don't condemn them, I thank God for their courage,

As I go on tonight to carry on the works of John Kennedy and the program that he began, I want your help, I want your hand, I want your prayers, I want your support to see that we get that job well done.

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I want your help and I want you to know just how you can help me. And you can also help yourself when you are helping me. You can also help America when you are helping me. You can send Genevieve Blatt to the United States Senate. There on this program where we will have equal rights for all Americans and special privileges for none, Genevieve Blatt will join Joe Clark and Pennsylvania will have two votes for all the people all the time.

I want to acknowledge and thank you for the presence tonight of one of my old colleagues who was in Congress when I first went there, Mike Bradley, from Pennsylvania. He and Frank Meyers and so many other men from this state have done so much to help me in the rough spots along the road that we have travelled. And Dave Lawrence just tied the blue ribbon on the package up at the Atlantic City convention, and I want to acknowledge that.

Several years ago when I was Majority Leader of the Senate, late in the evening, we had a crisis develop. I called upon a very fine and able citizen that night to come from Pennsylvania to help me, to give me legal advice that needed, and he gave me that help. I have never forgotten what that help meant. It came from my friend Mike Musmanno. And I do so hope that on Tuesday next, Judge Musmanno and every single friend that he has in Pennsylvania will come to my help again by sending Genevieve Blatt to the Senate of the United States.

When Genevieve comes there and joins her able colleague, I believe that with their support and with the support of the Democrats and Republicans across the land, we will keep the flame, we will keep America moving we will keep this Nation -- and I pray the world -- on the path to peace and progress, and to a better life for all mankind.

I want to thank each of you that paid to come to this dinner tonight, and the sacrifice that you made, that your families made, in order that you could come here to help your party help your country. Ladybird and I are both grateful for it and we won't forget it.

I am so proud to be back here in Philadelphia. I am proud and I can come here to the cradle of American liberty and express to you a sure and strong and solid pride in this generation of Americans.

When this campaign began that most of you wish had been over a long time ago, there were those who predicted that the people of America could be persuaded to vote their divisions and to fill the ballot boxes with their frustrations and dissatisfactions. Tonight, as this campaign nears its close, I know, and I think you know, that that is not the case. There is one crack in the Liberty Bell, but come next Tuesday there won't be another. Like the patriots of Independence Hall nearly 200 years ago, this generation of Americans stands for a united America, for an America that is devoted to peace, for an America that is dedicated to human progress and human prosperity, to an America that is unafraid of the challenges of the future at home or anywhere in the world. And above all else, this generation of Americans stands proudly for responsibility. And that is just what the vote is going to show next Tuesday.

Since Sunday evening I have been in New England and in the New South, from Boston to Los Angeles, from

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Philadelphia to Miami. I have been in the Far West and the Midwest, and tonight I am here in one of the really great metropolitan cities of the world. I am confident tonight of one thing: In their hearts, the people of America know what is right. The people of America know that it is right that America should continue to stand as the strong and the steady and the stable center of the cause of all free men. The people of America know that it is right that America should continue to continue to work with compassion and courage and confidence to make life better for all of man, for so long as there has been an American nation, the American people have been devoted to the principles of prudence, to the practice of frugality and thrift, and to the purposes of conservation and renewal.

We have made this Nation strong by warring on waste. Today, at the summit of our success, we want to change the waste that we see throughout too much of our national life. Abraham Lincoln wiped slavery from this land 100 years ago and we here in the Brotherhood City tonight pledge that we will wipe the waste of human poverty from this land in our lifetime. We want to wipe out the waste of idle men and idle machines. We want to wipe out the waste of decaying cities and dying towns, and I take such pride in the great work that you have done in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in this respect. We want to wipe out the waste of untrained youth, unemployed fathers, and uncared for grandparents, because we know that the happiness and the health of our people is not served by government which is indifferent to the burdens that are imposed upon them. We want compassionate government. We want concerned government, but we want government that is not careless or wasteful with the taxpayers' dollar.

There are changes that we want to make and that we must make, prudent changes, responsible changes, changes I think for the better. But we never want to change the character or the conscience of our American system, and that is what you are going to prove in this election next Tuesday because the vote that you cast, and the vote that every American casts on next Tuesday will be heard around the world. America today is living in a goldfish bowl. The spotlight of 3 billion human beings is looking to us for leadership, and waiting and watching to know and to learn what kind of leadership you are going to offer yourselves and the world, and in the capitals of the free world, and in the capitals of the Communist countries, new men in new positions, some that they just took over last week, are there waiting for Philadelphia's election returns to come in. They are waiting to learn whether we have this strongest and this most successful nation on earth -- whether we intend to lay down the burdens of responsibility, and whether we intend to lay down the opportunities of leadership, and whether we intend to abandon all the gains of 30 years, and, in the words of some, turn it back to the States.

Well, I know, and I think you know, that the returns that they read will serve notice that this generation of Americans intends to hold the course of peace, of patience, of perseverance, of prudence, of progress, and of complete and absolute preparedness, and when this election is over and when the votes are counted and when the returns are in, the free world and the Communist world will know that the alliances of free men are going to stand in greater unity. They are going to stand with greater purpose, and they are going to stand with greater confidence for whatever we have to face.

The meaning of this election will be clear to all, that a united America is going to lead the world in uniting free men to win the contests of this century for freedom, for justice, and for decency on earth for our fellow man. We have in this land tonight the strongest and the freest and the most successful system of government. We have the richest and the most prosperous society that has ever been known anywhere, by any people, at anytime. And your vote on next Tuesday is a vote to decide whether we can and whether we will keep what we have and what has been wrought for us by all who have given their lives and their labors in the years before. And if ever there has been an election when matters of party and partisanship mattered for little, then it is this election this year.

You will not be voting for party. You will not be voting for personality. The outcome of this election will not be a mandate for one man. It must be and it will be a mandate for one nation and one people, with one purpose, under one great Constitution, with one meaning for all Americans.

Far too long, much too long, this Nation, born here in the City of Brotherly Love, has been a Nation with its strength divided. For too long we have been a Nation of North and South, and East and West; a Nation divided by region and by race and by religion. And I believe that there is a will among the people tonight for all of us Americans to come together instead of coming apart. And on Tuesday next the vote of the people I think will prove to all in this land and in every land that there is not going to be another crack in that Liberty Bell.

When William Penn founded this city almost 300 years ago, he wrote out a prayer for Philadelphia, and in that prayer, as most of you, I know, remember, there are these words, and I quote them: "What love, what care, what service, what travail has there been to bring thee forth and preserve thee from such as would abuse and defile thee. My soul prays to God for thee that thou may stand in the day of trial, that thy children may be blessed of the Lord and thy people may be saved by His power."

Those words express the prayer in my heart tonight for the people of Philadelphia and for the people of America. So many have given so much to win for us what we have tonight. Together we must not and we shall not lose all of this in one moment of passion or frustration or recklessness with the peace, or a moment of irresponsibility with our unity.

Thirty-five men before me have held the office that is entrusted to me tonight. All of those men, from George Washington to John Kennedy, have worked and prayed and hoped for peace and for unity and for progress and prosperity for their people. And so long as the trust of this office is mine to uphold that will be my work, that will be my prayer, that will be my hope for all Americans.

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(9:05 PM)