

washingtonpost.com

Text: Remarks by Maryland Lt. Gov. Steele to the National Republican Convention

FDCH E-Media, Inc.

Tuesday, August 31, 2004; 10:24 PM

The text of speech by Maryland Lt. Gov. Michael Steele, Deputy Permanent Chairman of the Convention at the Republican National Convention:

STEELE: Good evening. Is this a great party or what?

(APPLAUSE)

Now, I had planned to give a moving defense of the conservative principles of the Republican Party tonight. But there was one problem: Barak Obama gave it last month at the Democratic Convention.

(APPLAUSE)

I am the first African-American ever elected to a statewide office in the great state of Maryland.

(APPLAUSE)

Even more amazingly, on a ticket with Governor Bob Ehrlich of the great state of Maryland, the first Republican governor in Maryland in over 40 years, I became the first Republican lieutenant governor of my state.

(APPLAUSE)

Together, Governor Ehrlich and I made history.

STEELE: I am proof that the blessings of liberty are within reach of every American. We have come an incredibly long way since the first Republican president, Abraham Lincoln, signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

And we have come a long way since another Republican president, Dwight Eisenhower, sent the National Guard into Little Rock to open the school doors to black and white children alike.

(APPLAUSE)

And we have come even further since a majority of Republicans in the United States Senate fought off the segregationist Democrats to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

(APPLAUSE)

My journey to this moment has been inspired by men and women who remained forever vigilant in their

Featured
Advertisement **XEROX.**

Advertisement



pursuit of equality and opportunity. Individuals like Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Ronald Reagan and Maebell Turner refused to accept the poisonous path of complacency. They each had dreams. But more important, they all had plans to turn those dreams into an American reality. America, ladies and gentlemen, is the promise of endless possibilities.

STEELE: America, my friends, remains that place Ronald Reagan called "a shining city on a hill."

(APPLAUSE)

But while the promise of America is real, the challenges we face to secure that promise for every American are no less real. We must continue to be vigilant in our fight against the blight of poverty, poor education and lost opportunity. What truly defines the civil rights challenge today isn't whether you can get a seat at the lunch counter, it's whether you can own that lunch counter to create legacy wealth for your children.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, at the Democratic convention, we heard one word over and over again: hope. But there's a problem, my friends. Hope is not a strategy. Hope doesn't protect your kids from terrorism. Hope doesn't lower your taxes. Hope doesn't help you buy a home. And hope doesn't ensure quality education for your children.

STEELE: As the book of James reminds us: "It's not enough just to have faith. Faith that does not show itself by good deeds is no faith at all."

(APPLAUSE)

You see, it's results that matter; and President Bush doesn't just talk about hope, he stands on a record of putting hope into action for America.

(APPLAUSE)

President Bush knows that a competitive marketplace will require providing our children with a first-rate education.

He knows that too many of our children are headed for the state pen instead of Penn State.

(APPLAUSE)

He knows that the "soft bigotry of low expectations" is today's version of blocking the entrance to the schoolhouse door.

President Bush didn't just hope for dramatic education reform, he turned that hope into No Child Left Behind, and our children are learning again.

(APPLAUSE)

He didn't just hope for economic recovery, he turned that hope into action by returning money to the people who earned it -- American families.

And today, over 111 million taxpayers are keeping more of their own money.

STEELE: President Bush didn't just hope for increased home ownership in America, he put his hope into action.

And today, more Americans own homes than ever before and for the first time ever, more than half of all minority families in America are home owners.

(APPLAUSE)

Now, I am, like many of you, a 20th century parent trying to raise 21st century kids. And I realize that my responsibility for them doesn't end when I bundle them up, kiss them on the forehead and send them off into the world. If we expect to succeed, if we expect our children to succeed, we must look to ourselves and not to government to raise our kids, start our businesses and provide care to our aging parent.

(APPLAUSE)

What government can do is give us the tools we need and then get out of the way and let us put our hopes into action.

(APPLAUSE)

But this requires strong leadership. Now, Senator Kerry's leadership is illustrated best by the Senator himself when he said, "I actually voted for the 87 billion dollars before I voted against it."

He also recently said that he doesn't want to use the word "war" to describe our efforts to fight terrorism.

STEELE: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I don't want to use the words "commander in chief" to describe John Kerry.

(APPLAUSE)

Just a year -- just a year after the first attack on the World Trade Center, most Senate Republicans and Senate Democrats rejected an amendment to slash our intelligence budget by \$6 billion, but not John Kerry. It was his amendment.

Most Senate Republicans and Senate Democrats voted to give our combat troops in Iraq and Afghanistan the funding necessary for things like body armor, but not John Kerry.

When Vice President Gore urged the Senate to "Reinvent Government" and reduce the federal workforce, most Republicans and Democrats voted for it -- you guessed it -- but not John Kerry.

STEELE: Republicans and Democrats in the Senate voted to reform the product liability system that was making trial lawyers rich while playgrounds and small businesses were closed, but not John Kerry.

Most senators in both parties voted to protect the institution of marriage through the Defense of Marriage Act signed into law by President Bill Clinton, but not John Kerry.

All right, enough about him.

(LAUGHTER)

(APPLAUSE)

Now, you may have heard me mentioned Maebell Turner as one of the great inspirations in my life. Maebell is just one of many faces in America who struggled to raise a family and believed that she could offer something more for her children.

She grew up the daughter of sharecroppers and had to quit school in the fifth grade to work a farm. She married a man who died of alcoholism.

She worked 45 years in a laundromat, making minimum wage, and still managed to send her kids to parochial school.

She never took public assistance, because as she put it, she didn't want the government raising her kids.

(APPLAUSE)

STEELE: Maebell always saw the hope that her kids would be better off than she was. And she channeled her hope for that legacy into action. Today, Maebell Turner has a daughter who is an accomplished pediatrician and a son who is the lieutenant governor of Maryland.

(APPLAUSE)

A lifelong Democrat, she once asked me how I could grow up to be such a strong Republican. I simply replied, "Mom, you raised me well."

(APPLAUSE)

You see -- you see, Maebell understood. She raised me to understand and appreciate some of the enduring principles that are important to all of us. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.

STEELE: You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred. You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and incentive. And you cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they should do for themselves.

(APPLAUSE)

These are the beliefs of our Republican Party. These are the beliefs and the principles that drew me to this party 28 years ago. And today, the standard-bearer of these convictions is George W. Bush.

(APPLAUSE)

So my friends, as we leave this place at the end of this great week, let's continue to work to re-elect a compassionate man who understands people's yearning for freedom, a man who knows that families make better decisions than government, and a man who turns hope into action, and moves us all toward that shining city on a hill: our president, George W. Bush.

Thank you, and God bless.

© 2004 E-Media

Advertising Links

What's this?

Audio Book CD Rental Services Online

Audio book rental services at On the Go Books. We offer unlimited books on CD at low monthly rates. Two weeks free for new members. Cancel anytime.

www.onthegobooks.com

Audio Books Corner

Rent, buy or download audiobooks. Choose from over 15,000 audiobooks.

www.simplyaudiobooks.com

The Audio Book Superstore

Buy or rent audiobooks for as low as \$9.95 per month. Choose from over 17,000 audiobook titles. Quick delivery to your door.

www.simplyaudiobooks.com