

# MONDALE

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SAN FRANCISCO, July 19--Following is the text of Walter F. Mondale's acceptance speech before the Democrats' 1984 national convention at the Moscone Convention Center here.

My fellow Americans:

I accept your nomination -- and I welcome the fight that comes with it.

Behind us now is the most wide-open race in political history.

It was noisy -- but our voices were heard. It was long -- but our stamina was tested. It was hot -- but the heat was passion, not anger. It was a rollercoaster -- but it made me a better candidate, and it will make me a stronger President.

I do not envy the drowsy harmony of the Republican Party. They squelch debate; we welcome it. They deny differences; we bridge them. They are uniform; we are united. They are a portrait of privilege; we are a mirror of America.

Just look at us: black and white, Asian and Hispanic, Native and immigrant, young and old, urban and rural, male and female -- from yuppie to lunchpail, from sea to shining sea.

When we in this hall speak for America -- it is America that is speaking.

When we speak of family, the voice is Mario Cuomo's.

When we speak of change, the words are Gary Hart's.

When we speak of hope, the fire is Jesse Jackson's.

When we speak of caring, the spirit is Ted Kennedy's.

When we speak of patriotism, the strength is John Glenn's.

When we speak of the future, the message is Geraldine Ferraro.

And now we leave San Francisco -- together.

Over the next hundred days, in every word we say, and every life we touch, we will be fighting for the American future.

Joan and I are parents of three wonderful children who will live much of their lives in the twenty-first century.

This election is a referendum on their future -- and ours.

So tonight I'd like to speak to the young people of America -- and to their parents and grandparents.

I'm Walter Mondale. You may have heard of me -- but you may not really know me.

I grew up in the farm towns of southern Minnesota. My dad was a preacher, and my mom taught music. We never had a dime. But we were rich in love and faith, and they taught me the values I've carried ever since.

They taught me to work hard; to stand on my own; to play by the rules; to tell the truth; to obey the law; to care for others; to love our country; to cherish our faith.

My story isn't unique.

In the last few weeks, I've deepened my admiration for someone who shares those values. Her immigrant father loved our country. Her widowed mother sacrificed for her family. And her own career is an American classic: Doing your work. Earning your way. Paying your dues. Rising on merit.

My Presidency will be about those values. My Vice President will be Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro.

Tonight, we open a new door to the future. Mr. Reagan calls that "tokenism." We call it America.

Ever since I graduated from Elmore High, I've been a Democrat.

I was Attorney General of my state; then a U.S. Senator. In 1976, an honest, caring man -- Jimmy Carter -- picked me as his running mate, and I was elected Vice President.

And in 1980, Ronald Reagan beat the pants off us.

So tonight, I want to say something to those of you across our country who voted for Mr. Reagan -- to Republicans, to Independents, and yes, to some Democrats:

I heard you. And our Party heard you.

After we lost, we didn't tell the American people that they were wrong. Instead, we began asking you what our mistakes had been.

For four years, I listened to the American people -- all of you. I traveled what seemed like every acre of America.

It wasn't easy. I remember late one night, as I headed from a speech in one city to a hotel a thousand miles away, someone said to me, "Fritz, I saw you on TV. Are those bags under your eyes natural?" And I said, "No, I got them the old fashioned way. I earned them."

To the thousands of Americans who welcomed me into your homes and businesses, your churches and synagogues: I thank you.

You confirmed my belief in our country's values. And you helped me learn and grow.

Tonight we come to you with a new realism: ready for the future, and recapturing the best in our tradition.

We know that America must have a strong defense, and a sober view of the Soviets.

We know that government must be as well-managed as it is well-meaning.

We know that a healthy, growing private economy is the key to our future.

We know that Harry Truman spoke the truth: "A President... has to be able to say yes and no, and more often no."

Look at our platform. There are no defense cuts that weaken our security; no business taxes that weaken our economy; no laundry lists that raid our Treasury.

We are wiser, stronger, and focused on the future. If Mr. Reagan wants to re-run the 1980 campaign: fine. Let them fight over the past. We're fighting for the American future -- and that's why we're going to win.

One last word to those who voted for Mr. Reagan.

I know what you were saying. But I also know what you were not saying.

You did not vote for a \$200 billion deficit.

You did not vote for an arms race.

You did not vote to turn the heavens into a battleground.

You did not vote to savage Social Security and Medicare.

You did not vote to trash the civil rights laws.

You did not vote to poison the environment.

You did not vote to assault the poor, the sick, and the disabled.

You did not vote to pay fifty bucks for a fifty-cent lightbulb.

Four years ago, many of you voted for Mr. Reagan because he promised you'd be better off. And today, the rich are better off. But working Americans are worse off, and the middle class is standing on a trap door.

Lincoln once said that ours must be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. What we have today is a government of the rich, by the rich, and for the rich.

First, there was Mr. Reagan's tax program. What happened was, he gave each of his rich friends enough tax relief to buy a Rolls Royce -- and he asked your family to pay for the hub caps.

Then they looked the other way at the rip-offs: soaring utility bills, phone bills, medical bills.

Then they crimped our future. They let us be routed in international competition, and now the help-wanted ads are full of listings for executives, and for dishwashers -- but not much in between.

Then they socked it to workers. They encouraged executives to vote themselves huge bonuses -- while using King Kong tactics to make workers take Hong Kong wages.

Mr. Reagan believes that the genius of America is in the boardrooms and exclusive country clubs. I believe that greatness can be found in the men and women who built our nation; do its work; and defend our freedom.

If this administration has a plan for a better future, they're keeping it a secret.

Here is the truth about the future: we are living on borrowed money and borrowed time. These deficits hike interest rates, clobber exports, stunt investment, kill jobs, undermine growth, cheat our kids, and shrink our future.

Whoever is inaugurated in January, the American people will have to pay Mr. Reagan's bills. The budget will be squeezed. Taxes will go up. And anyone who says they won't is not telling the truth.

I mean business. By the end of my first term, I will cut the deficit by two-thirds.

Let's tell the truth. Mr. Reagan will raise taxes, and so will I. He won't tell you. I just did.

There's another difference. When he raises taxes, it won't be done fairly. He will sock it to average-income families again, and leave his rich friends alone. I won't.

To the corporations and freeloaders who play the loopholes or pay no taxes, my message is: your free ride is over.

To the Congress, my message is: We must cut spending and pay as we go. If you don't hold the line, I will: that's what the veto is for.

Now that's my plan to cut the deficit. Mr. Reagan is keeping his a secret until after the election. That's not leadership; that's salesmanship.

I challenge Mr. Reagan to put his plan on the table next to mine -- and debate it with me on national television. Americans want the truth about the future -- not after the election, but now.

When the American economy leads the world, the jobs and prosperity flow here, and the future is here for our children. That's not happening today. This is the worst trade year in our history. Three million of our best jobs have gone overseas.

Mr. Reagan has no plan to get our competitive edge back; we do.

We will cut the deficit, reduce interest rates, make our exports affordable, and make America number one again.

We will launch a renaissance in education, science, and learning. A mind is a terrible thing to waste. This must be the best-educated, best-trained generation in American history.

It's time for a season of excellence. Parents must turn off the television; students must do their homework; teachers must teach; America must compete.

To big companies that send our best jobs overseas, my message is: We need those jobs here at home. Our country won't help your business -- unless your business helps our country.

To countries that close their markets to us, my message is: We will not be pushed around any more. We will have a President who stands up for American workers and American businesses and American farmers.

When I grew up, and people asked us to imagine the future, we talked about the great days ahead. But a few months ago, when I asked some fifth-graders in Texas to imagine the future, they talked about nuclear war.

Lately, as we've neared the election, this administration has been talking about a safer world. There's a difference: as President, I will work for peace and strength from my first day in office -- not from my first day campaigning for re-election.

As President, I will reassert American values. I'll press for human rights in Central America, and for the removal of all foreign forces from the region. And in my first hundred days, I will stop the illegal war in Nicaragua.

We know our deep differences with the Soviets. America condemns their repression of dissidents and Jews; their suppression of Solidarity; their invasion of Afghanistan; their meddling around the world.

But the truth is that between us, we can destroy the planet. Every President since the bomb went off understood that. Every other President talked with the Soviets and negotiated arms control: why not this one?

Why can't we meet in summits at least once a year? Why can't we reach agreements to save this earth? The truth is, we can.

President Kennedy was right: We must never negotiate out of fear. But we must never fear to negotiate. For the sake of civilization, we must negotiate a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze before those weapons destroy us all.

The second term of the Mondale-Ferraro Administration will begin in 1989.

By the start of the next decade, I want to ask our children their dreams, and hear not one word about nuclear nightmares.

By the start of the next decade, I want to walk into any classroom in America and hear some of the brightest students say, "I want to be a teacher."

By the start of the next decade, I want to walk into any public health clinic in America and hear the doctor say, "We haven't seen a single hungry child this year."

By the start of the next decade, I want to walk into any store in America; pick up the best product, of the best quality, at the best price; turn it over; and read, "Made in the U.S.A."

By the start of the next decade, I want to meet with the most successful business leaders anywhere in America, and see as many minorities and women in that room as there are in this room tonight.

By the start of the next decade, I want to point to the Supreme Court and say, "Justice is in good hands."

Before the start of the next decade, I want to go to my second Inaugural, raise my right hand, and swear to "preserve, protect, and defend" a Constitution that contains the Equal Rights Amendment.

America is a future each generation must enlarge; a door each generation must open; a promise each generation must keep.

For the rest of my life, I want to talk with young people about their future.

And whatever their race, whatever their religion, whatever their sex, I want to hear some of them say what I say -- with joy and reverence -- tonight: "I want to be President of the United States."

Thank you very much.

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