



Everett Dirksen

Republican National Convention Nomination of Barry Goldwater

“The Peddler’s Grandson”



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I prefer not to proceed until the overtone has subsided. And I think you’ll accord everyone who will appear on this platform this privilege. Will you be quiet, please?

Mr. Chairman, Delegates, Alternates, and my fellow countrymen:

In a few days we shall return home. We shall have had the energizing fellowship of a spirited convention. We shall carry back with us a set of principles we have adopted declaring where we stand. We shall have selected the leaders to command our forces and we shall be prepared to march to victory. Let neither doubt nor defeatism impair our forces or our strength. Beyond the rough terrain of the intervening months before November, there lies the sweet, green valley of victory -- and it can be ours.

In that spirit, let me tell you simply and briefly about a man. He is the grandson of a peddler - - a peddler who was a proud, honorable and spirited man, who left his ancestral country in Europe at an early age and came to this land over a century ago. He arrived nine years before the Civil War. Almost immediately he set cross country to make a home on the high frontier of the West. There he peddled his wares among mining camps, among lumbering camps, and the people of this western land. When he came, there were but 31 states in the Union. He was a merchant and became a frontier leader. And it is about his grandson that I would speak to you this afternoon -- and that grandson’s name is Barry Goldwater.



I want to speak of him as the whole man, moving forward toward whatever destiny may provide. There is today a strange cynicism that has fastened upon our thinking. It may be a kind of sadistic sport to hear a statement made and then to hear somebody go back into history and unleash an attack because the statement of the act was not consistent with something that happened 10, 12, or 15 years ago. That doesn't bother me because my appraisal and your appraisal of an individual must not be fragmented -- instead of thinking of the whole man, impelled by conviction to do and to say at a given time what he believes must be said or done.

It is a common experience that quoting only a part of what a man has said has become truly a favorite indoor sport. By this standard no man ever lived, no hero was ever born, who by some utterance, some vote, some opinion can't lead destiny.

I believe the time has come to think of the whole man in terms of a more tolerant spirit and to consider his actions, his works, his attributes measured against the problems and duties and the responsibilities which loom upon the horizon, both at home and abroad.

Consider his moral courage -- the courage of this settler's grandson. When a poll was taken some years ago to select the five greatest Senators no longer serving or living to grace the unfilled ovals in the Senate Reception Room, who do you think was selected: Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Robert Marion La Follette, and Robert Alonzo Taft! Their common attribute was courage in facing the challenges of their day. Each one took to heart what came from the vaults of the heavens when the Lord talked to Joshua and said that he took over that ancient host, "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; neither be thou dismayed, neither be thou afraid." That was the Lord's command, that to Joshua be courageous.

Already in 12 short years in the Senate of the United States, Barry Goldwater has repeatedly cast votes that won him no applause, that did nothing for his political advancement, but it did show the blazing courage of the man -- in refusing to take the easy course.

In the days and years ahead, as we assess the fevers abroad and we appraise the problems at home, it will take courage of a high order to make the decisions and to withstand the beckoning of the multitude to go down an unsound path. The peddler's grandson has the courage and it is a part of the whole man.

Secondly, he has a conscience. How commonly we think of conscience as a still, small accusing voice when one is set suddenly upon a certain act or a course of conduct. But it is something more than that. It's always there to monitor the morals and the conduct and the action of any man. It is like a fixed star in the firmament to light the way. What is deemed snap judgment is more often than not a judgment arrested by the acute conscience which operates faster than reason. And whether it be in the domain of peace or rearmament or the scrapping of weapons or internal security or domestic affairs, the peddler's grandson has a conscience to chart his course.



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And when he committed the fruit of his conscience to paper four years ago, in that volume *The Conscience of a Conservative*, over two and a half million copies were printed and sold as a great, incredible testament to the interests of the American people.

Courage and conscience are a part of the whole man. Now whether in commerce or industry, in finance or in public service, there is such a thing as competence. What is it but the right touch, the right vision, in the right way, at the right time. What man could be a jet pilot without it? But Barry Goldwater -- and listen -- Barry Goldwater has demonstrated it over and over again in every activity.

As chief of state, of staff for the Arizona National Guard, he desegregated that Guard after World War II, long before civil rights became a burning issue in this country. He brought integration to his own business enterprises. For his own employees he provided a five day week and life insurance and all those benefits that go with it. All this was done without fanfare or the blathering of trumpets. And in an age, my friends, of self-congratulated do-gooders, he was a good doer!

Yes, the grandson of that man who came here a 112 years ago from his ancestral home has demonstrated his courage, his conscience, and his competence. But he's demonstrated more. In an age when gratitude is scant for services rendered, we overlook so often the matter of contribution to the well-being of the party. Yet the whole man can be judged only when you consider his fidelity to his party and his willingness to go forth and help to make it a vital political instrument.

From the moment he came to the Senate 12 years ago until this good hour, I can name no man -- and I make no exception -- I can name no man in the Republican Party in this country who day after day and year after year has applied his talents, his zeal to the Republican cause as the grandson of that peddler.

No weather was too foul, no journey too long, no sacrifice too great to take him forward on a mission for his party and its candidates. He has raised money and made speeches and has rallied organization support. And I ask you: Who will forget his great speech in a dark hour for his supporters in the 1960 Republican Convention when they were trying to force the nomination on him? And he stood before that convention and spoke to his reporters and asked them to support the Republican Party and its candidates and to stand united. And in the next 90 days, he made 126 speeches in 26 states for the Nixon-Lodge ticket. I haven't forgotten it and neither have you.

Courage, conscience, competence, contribution -- those are a part of the whole man.

In my office in Washington, is a set of silver spurs that I received for my devotion to the party. I doubt whether I deserve the generous inscription on that plaque. But I know it's for him. He deserves a set of golden spurs for his immeasurable effort -- the energy, and sacrifice. Contribution is part of the whole man.



Now all of us were raised to love our country, to take pride in its glorious history, and to defend it with our lives if necessary. We call it "patriotism" -- a word once revered by everybody. Today it's the fashion to sneer at that word and to label positions of strength as extremism, to find other nations' points of views better than our own. Perhaps too long the bugles of retreat have sounded! And I put my chips on a man who has that fidelity to his country.

Consider our diplomatic representative in Zanzibar. He's at the point of a bayonet, marched to the dock, and said get out. In Ghana, where we're spending over 250 million dollars, they hauled down our flag from the embassy flagpole and desecrated it. A nation like Panama, that could not exist today were it not for the United States and a great Republican Teddy Roosevelt, can fuss and scold at us with impunity. And then along with it, there is that bearded Communist in Cuba who reviles and scolds and castigates the world's greatest country -- and confiscates our property. There is such a thing as the Scripture says about going the first mile -- you get no credit for it. That's the compelled mile. There is such a thing as going the second mile, but there's also such a thing as a nation's honor and a nation's prestige!

Twenty centuries ago when the captain of the Roman Guard had the Apostle Paul in thongs¹ and was ready to discourage him -- that great apostolate sales manager said, "I am a Roman citizen!" -- and they took off the thongs. It meant something. But we've come a long ways, since that time.

What oh what has become of that vital thrill, that pride of being an American? We heard so much about American prestige in the 1960 campaign. It was a phony issue -- believe me. But that was four years ago. The time is here for America to retrieve her selfishness. I cling back to the firmness of the grandson of that peddler, Barry Goldwater! But it will be a...

[Demonstration on convention floor.]

Please. Music. [Gavel pounding.]

Let me finish. Let me finish this nominating speech and the Chairman is anxious that I complete it and I want to comply. So will you be quiet please?

I add to all these things -- to courage and confidence and contribution and all the rest -- the devotion to the Constitution of the United States. That document not only created a balanced government in this country -- it did more than that -- it was a charter of freedom as well.

Barry Goldwater's father could come here 112 years ago and share in the benefits and the protection of that great document, which lends itself to the high and low, to the mighty, to the rich, to the poor, and to the humble. It's been the central core of Republican gospel. One hundred years ago our party met in Maryland in Baltimore. They nominated Lincoln for the second time. What did they put in that platform?



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Let me read one sentence, the first pledge, "Resolved, That it is the highest duty of every American citizen to maintain against all their enemies the integrity of the union and the permanent authority of the Constitution of the United States."

Do you know -- let me finish. You can't sit in the Senate of the United States or the House of Representatives without holding up your hand and affirming or taking an oath that you'll uphold and defend the Constitution and the laws of the country. But what is it -- words on parchment? Yes, until human brain and human application gives it meaning and form. Just as is being done by people in judicial robes everywhere in this land almost every day.

Is it not then proper for a United States Senator like Barry Goldwater, who has sworn to uphold and defend and to bear true faith to the Constitution, to share a view of his own on the controversial issues -- the most controversial -- that we've had for a long, long time. So it was with him -- this grandson of an immigrant peddler. He took his stand on the constitutionality of two titles in the most controversial bill with which I never had anything to do. And in so doing, he exhibited a moral courage not excelled anywhere in any part of the body of which I have any knowledge.

And along with it, he's been a soldier and took the oath to his country. He has been a Senator and with equal fidelity, Barry Goldwater would discharge his presidential oath to enforce and execute all the laws of the land and uphold the Constitution and that's a part of the whole man.

Now let me conclude with one thought. We come then to the last consideration -- as we contemplate his courage, his conscience, his competence, his contribution to party service, the pride in his country, his constitutional devotion -- and that consideration is the opportunity for an ideological choice for the Republican party and for the country.

For twenty years -- and you know it as well as I do -- the conservative position has hovered -- or they have hovered over us, the controversy over the conservative position, like a menacing specter. Simply expressed, it is men that like Bismarck, whose federated Germany withered away, like Britain's almost nonexistent Liberal Party. We've give an inch here, a foot there, a mile there and finally embrace a socialist philosophy that has enervated and debilitated three quarters of the whole globe.

Gradually, the weakening effect and the divisive effect has become noticeable. Those strongly wedded to Republican philosophy have so often sat on their hands on election day or taken a walk. Others, perceiving no difference between our party and the other party, have taken the ADA version straight. Still others with high and fervent hopes have felt the gentle hands of time might bring about unity of purpose and action -- and that with banners unfurled and trumpets sounding a common note, we could inscribe the great shining "V" of victory upon our Republican shield once more.

But even as the Apostle Paul wrote centuries ago: "For if the trumpet sounds an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"



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The time has come for a certain sound. The time has come and the chance has come to make a choice. Ask yourselves why is it that this man who certainly has sounded the call to conservatism should be subjected to the abuse which has been heaped upon him. Is it because he favors a clear choice that the Democrat Party as now constituted doesn't dare face? Is it because there is a fear that the American people in their traditional sense of fair play are beginning to grasp the truth that this man utters? Delegates to this convention: Believe me -- the tide is turning. And let's give that philosophy of the peddler's grandson the chance.

So with the platform as our chart in conquer, with a militant son of an immigrant peddler as our leader, let's give a hundred and ninety million Americans the choice they've been waiting for. Let's place before the people, the cause of a party which was born to preserve the union, and to give sane constitutional government, and to keep government from becoming the master instead of the servant of the people. Let's rededicate ourselves and our nation.

And I'm honored indeed and I'm proud to nominate my colleague from Arizona to be the Republican nominee for President of the United States.

¹ A thong is a narrow strip of leather used for binding or lashing; a whip of plated leather or cord (the freedictionary.com).