

Clinton Speech

A Speech Made By Hillary Clinton, 25th August 2015

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IkZiwr798

Thank you, Reno! It's great to be back in Nevada. My original plan for this visit was to focus on our agenda to help small businesses and entrepreneurs. This week we proposed new steps to cut red tape and taxes, and make it easier for small businesses to get the credit they need to grow and hire. Because I believe that in America, if you can dream it, you should be able to build it. We'll be talking a lot more about our economic plans in the days and weeks ahead.

But today, I want to address something I hear from Americans all over our country. Everywhere I go, people tell me how concerned they are by the divisive rhetoric coming from my opponent in this election. It's like nothing we've heard before from a nominee for President of the United States.

From the start, Donald Trump has built his campaign on prejudice and paranoia. He's taking hate groups mainstream and helping a radical fringe take over one of America's two major political parties. His disregard for the values that make our country great is profoundly dangerous.

In just the past week, under the guise of "outreach" to African Americans, Trump has stood up in front of largely white audiences and described black communities in insulting and ignorant terms:

"Poverty. Rejection. Horrible education. No housing. No homes. No ownership. Crime at levels nobody has seen... Right now, you walk down the street, you get shot." Those are his words. Donald Trump misses so much. He doesn't see the success of black leaders in every field, The vibrancy of black-owned businesses or the strength of the black church. He doesn't see the excellence of historically black colleges and universities or the pride of black parents watching their children thrive and he certainly doesn't have any solutions to take on the reality of systemic racism and create more equity and opportunity in communities of colour.

It takes a lot of nerve to ask people he's ignored and mistreated for decades, "What do you have to lose?" The answer is everything! Trump's lack of knowledge or experience or

solutions would be bad enough. But what he's doing here is more sinister. Trump is reinforcing harmful stereotypes and offering a dog whistle to his most hateful supporters. It's a disturbing preview of what kind of President he'd be.

This is what I want to make clear today. A man with a long history of racial discrimination, who traffics in dark conspiracy theories drawn from the pages of supermarket tabloids and the far reaches of the internet, should never run our government or command our military. If he doesn't respect all Americans, how can he serve all Americans?

Now, I know some people still want to give Trump the benefit of the doubt. They hope that he will eventually reinvent himself, that there's a kinder, gentler, more responsible Donald Trump waiting in the wings somewhere. After all, it's hard to believe anyone, let alone a nominee for President of the United States could really believe all the things he says. But the hard truth is, there's no other Donald Trump. This is it.

Maya Angelou once said: "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time." Well, throughout his career and this campaign, Donald Trump has shown us exactly who he is. We should believe him.

When Trump was getting his start in business, he was sued by the Justice Department for refusing to rent apartments to black and Latino tenants. Their applications would be marked with a C for coloured and then rejected. Three years later, the Justice Department took Trump back to court because he hadn't changed. The pattern continued through the decades.

State regulators fined one of Trump's casinos for repeatedly removing black dealers from the floor. No wonder the turnover rate for his minority employees was way above average. And let's not forget Trump first gained political prominence leading the charge for the so-called Birthers. He promoted the racist lie that President Obama isn't really an American citizen, part of a sustained effort to delegitimize America's first black President.

In 2015, Trump launched his own campaign for President with another racist lie. He described Mexican immigrants as rapists and criminals. And he accused the Mexican government of actively sending them across the border. None of that is true. Oh, and by the way, Mexico's not paying for his wall either. If it ever gets built, you can be sure that American taxpayers will be stuck with the bill.

Since then, there's been a steady stream of bigotry. We all remember when Trump said a distinguished federal judge born in Indiana couldn't be trusted to do his job because, quote,

“He’s a Mexican.” Think about that. The man who today is the standard bearer of the Republican Party said a federal judge was incapable of doing his job solely because of his heritage. Even the Republican Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, described that as “the textbook definition of a racist comment.” To this day, he’s never apologized to Judge Curiel. But for Trump, that’s just par for the course.

This is someone who retweets white supremacists online, like the user who goes by the name white-genocide-TM. Trump took this fringe bigot with a few dozen followers and spread his message to 11 million people. His campaign famously posted an anti-Semitic image, a Star of David imposed over a sea of dollar bills, that first appeared on a white supremacist website.

The Trump campaign also selected a prominent white nationalist leader as a delegate in California. They only dropped him under pressure. When asked in a nationally televised interview whether he would disavow the support of David Duke, a former leader of the Ku Klux Klan, Trump wouldn’t do it. Only later, again under mounting pressure, did he backtrack. And when Trump was asked about anti-Semitic slurs and death threats coming from his supporters, he refused to condemn them.

Through it all, he has continued pushing discredited conspiracy theories with racist undertones. Trump said thousands of American Muslims in New Jersey cheered the 9/11 attacks. They didn’t.

He suggested that Ted Cruz’s father was involved in the Kennedy assassination. Perhaps in Trump’s mind, because he was a Cuban immigrant, he must have had something to do with it. Of course there’s absolutely no evidence of that.

Just recently, Trump claimed President Obama founded ISIS. And then he repeated that nonsense over and over. His latest paranoid fever dream is about my health. All I can say is, Donald, dream on. This is what happens when you treat the National Enquirer like Gospel. It’s what happens when you listen to the radio host Alex Jones, who claims that 9/11 and the Oklahoma City bombings were inside jobs. He said the victims of the Sandy Hook massacre were child actors and no one was actually killed there. Trump didn’t challenge those lies. He went on Jones’ show and said: “Your reputation is amazing. I will not let you down.” This man wants to be President of the United States.

I’ve stood by President Obama’s side as he made the toughest decisions a Commander-in-Chief ever has to make. In times of crisis, our country depends on steady leadership, clear

thinking and calm judgment because one wrong move can mean the difference between life and death. The last thing we need in the Situation Room is a loose cannon who can't tell the difference between fact and fiction, and who buys so easily into racially-tinged rumours. Someone detached from reality should never be in charge of making decisions that are as real as they come. It's another reason why Donald Trump is simply temperamentally unfit to be President of the United States.

Now, some people will say that his bluster and bigotry is just over-heated campaign rhetoric, an outrageous person saying outrageous things for attention. But look at the policies Trump has proposed. They would put prejudice into practice. And don't be distracted by his latest attempts to muddy the waters. He may have some new people putting new words in his mouth but we know where he stands.

He would form a deportation force to round up millions of immigrants and kick them out of the country. He'd abolish the bedrock constitutional principle that says if you're born in the United States, you're an American citizen. He says that children born in America to undocumented parents are, quote, "anchor babies" and should be deported, millions of them. And he'd ban Muslims around the world, 1.5 billion men, women, and children, from entering our country just because of their religion.

Think about that for a minute. How would it actually work? People landing in U.S. airports would line up to get their passports stamped, just like they do now. But in Trump's America, when they step up to the counter, the immigration officer would ask every single person, "What is your religion?" And then what? What if someone says, "I'm a Christian," but the agent doesn't believe them. Do they have to prove it? How would they do that?

Ever since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock, America has distinguished itself as a haven for people fleeing religious persecution. Under Donald Trump, America would distinguish itself as the only country in the world to impose a religious test at the border. Come to think of it, there actually may be one place that does that. It's the so-called Islamic State. The territory ISIS controls. It would be a cruel irony if America followed its lead.

Don't worry, some will say, as President, Trump will be surrounded by smart advisors who will rein in his worst impulses. So when a tweet gets under his skin and he wants to retaliate with a cruise missile, maybe cooler heads will be there to convince him not to. Maybe. But look at who he's put in charge of his campaign.

Trump likes to say he only hires the “best people.” But he’s had to fire so many campaign managers it’s like an episode of the Apprentice. The latest shake-up was designed to, quote “Let Trump be Trump.” To do that, he hired Stephen Bannon, the head of a right wing website called Breitbart.com, as campaign CEO. To give you a flavour of his work, here are a few headlines they’ve published:

Birth Control Makes Women Unattractive and Crazy.

Would You Rather Your Child Had Feminism or Cancer?

Gabby Giffords: The Gun Control Movement’s Human Shield

Hoist It High And Proud: The Confederate Flag Proclaims A Glorious Heritage.

That one came shortly after the Charleston massacre, when Democrats and Republicans alike were doing everything they could to heal racial divides. Breitbart tried to inflame them further. Just imagine Donald Trump reading that and thinking: “this is what I need more of in my campaign.”

Bannon has nasty things to say about pretty much everyone. This spring, he railed against Paul Ryan for, quote “rubbing his social-justice Catholicism in my nose every second.” No wonder he’s gone to work for Trump, the only Presidential candidate ever to get into a public feud with the Pope.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Centre, which tracks hate groups, Breitbart embraces ideas on the extremist fringe of the conservative right, racist ideas, race baiting ideas, anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant ideas, all key tenets making up an emerging racist ideology known as the ‘Alt-Right.’ Alt-Right is short for “Alternative Right.”

The Wall Street Journal describes it as a loosely organized movement, mostly online, that rejects mainstream conservatism, promotes nationalism and views immigration and multiculturalism as threats to white identity. The de facto merger between Breitbart and the Trump Campaign represents a landmark achievement for the Alt-Right. A fringe element has effectively taken over the Republican Party.

This is part of a broader story, the rising tide of hard line, right wing nationalism around the world. Just yesterday, one of Britain’s most prominent right wing leaders, Nigel Farage, who stoked anti-immigrant sentiments to win the referendum on leaving the European Union, campaigned with Donald Trump in Mississippi. Farage has called for a ban on the children of legal immigrants from public schools and health services, has said women are quote “worth

less” than men, and supports scrapping laws that prevent employers from discriminating based on race. That’s who Trump wants by his side.

The godfather of this global brand of extreme nationalism is Russian President Vladimir Putin. In fact, Farage has appeared regularly on Russian propaganda programs. Now he’s standing on the same stage as the Republican nominee. Trump himself heaps praise on Putin and embrace pro-Russian policies. He talks casually of abandoning our NATO allies, recognizing Russia’s annexation of Crimea, and of giving the Kremlin a free hand in Eastern Europe more generally. American presidents from Truman to Reagan have rejected the kind of approach Trump is taking on Russia. We should, too.

All of this adds up to something we’ve never seen before. Of course there’s always been a paranoid fringe in our politics, steeped in racial resentment. But it’s never had the nominee of a major party stoking it, encouraging it, and giving it a national megaphone, until now.

On David Duke’s radio show the other day, the mood was jubilant. “We appear to have taken over the Republican Party,” one white supremacist said. Duke laughed. There’s still more work to do, he said.

No one should have any illusions about what’s really going on here. The names may have changed. Racists now call themselves racialists. White supremacists now call themselves white nationalists. The paranoid fringe now calls itself alt-right. But the hate burns just as bright.

And now Trump is trying to rebrand himself as well. Don’t be fooled. There’s an old Mexican proverb that says “Tell me with whom you walk, and I will tell you who you are.” We know who Trump is. A few words on a teleprompter won’t change that. He says he wants to make America great again but his real message remains make America hate again.

This isn’t just about one election. It’s about who we are as a nation. It’s about the kind of example we want to set for our children and grandchildren. Next time you watch Donald Trump rant on television, think about all the kids listening across our country. They hear a lot more than we think. Parents and teachers are already worried about what they’re calling the Trump Effect. Bullying and harassment are on the rise in our schools, especially targeting students of colour, Muslims, and immigrants. At a recent high school basketball game in Indiana, white students held up Trump signs and taunted Latino players on the opposing team with chants of “Build the wall” and “Speak English.”

After a similar incident in Iowa, one frustrated school principal said, “They see it in a presidential campaign and now it’s OK for everyone to say this.” We wouldn’t tolerate that kind of behaviour in our own homes. How can we stand for it from a candidate for president? This is a moment of reckoning for every Republican dismayed that the party of Lincoln has become the party of Trump. It’s a moment of reckoning for all of us who love our country and believe that America is better than this.

Twenty years ago, when Bob Dole accepted the Republican nomination, he pointed to the exits and told any racists in the Party to get out. The week after 9/11, George W Bush went to a mosque and declared for everyone to hear that Muslims “love America just as much as I do.” In 2008, John McCain told his own supporters they were wrong about the man he was trying to defeat. Senator McCain made sure they knew – Barack Obama is an American citizen and “a decent person.” We need that kind of leadership again.

Every day, more Americans are standing up and saying “enough is enough” including a lot of Republicans. I’m honoured to have their support. And I promise you this: with your help, I will be a President for Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. For those who vote for me and those who don’t, for all Americans. Because I believe we are stronger together.

It’s a vision for the future rooted in our values and reflected in a rising generation of young people who are the most open, diverse, and connected we’ve ever seen. Just look at our fabulous Olympic team. Like Ibtihaj Muhammad, an African American Muslim from New Jersey who won the bronze medal in fencing with grace and skill. Would she even have a place in Donald Trump’s America? When I was growing up, Simone Manuel wouldn’t have been allowed to swim in the same public pool as Katie Ledecky. Now they’re winning Olympic medals as teammates.

So let’s keep moving forward together. Let’s stand up against prejudice and paranoia. Let’s prove once again, that America is great because America is good. Thank you, and may God bless the United States.