

CONGRESSMAN ROBERT H. MICHEL
LEADERSHIP ELECTION CONFERENCE REMARKS
DECEMBER 8, 1986

THANK YOU HENRY AND NANCY FOR GETTING ME OFF TO SUCH
A GOOD START /

MY COLLEAGUES, YOU ALL KNOW HOW SWEET IT IS TO WIN AN
ELECTION /

WELL LET ME TELL YOU THAT BEING ELECTED BY YOUR PEERS
TO BE THEIR LEADER / IS SOMETHING EXTRA SPECIAL AND I WANT
TO THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR YOUR VOTE OF
CONFIDENCE ///

DURING THIS PAST WEEK, WE IN THE LEADERSHIP HAVE HAD
THE GOOD FORTUNE TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH THE INCOMING
FRESHMAN CLASS AND I CAN TELL YOU VETERAN MEMBERS THAT
WITHOUT RESERVATION IT'S THE BEST I'VE SEEN /

EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEM HAS COME HERE WITH A DEEP
PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND SENSE OF PURPOSE / AND YOU'RE
REALLY GOING TO LOVE THEM ONCE YOU GET TO KNOW THEM /

AS FOR OUR TOTAL NUMBER, WE LOST A FEW, BUT ON
BALANCE -- ALL THINGS BEING CONSIDERED -- WE FARED PRETTY
WELL/ AND I'M SO HAPPY TO SEE ALL BUT 3 OF YOU VETERAN
INCUMBENTS BACK HERE WITH US/

parenthetically I SHUDDER TO THINK OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED/ HAD
THE IRANIAN-CONTRA ARMS FLAP STORY BROKE A WEEK OR SO
BEFORE THE ELECTION/

I'M SURE YOU ARE ALL AS SORRY AS I AM THAT WE TOOK
SUCH A BEATING IN THE SENATE AND LOST CONTROL OF THAT
BODY/

WHAT DO WE SEE AHEAD OF US WITH A DEMOCRATIC
CONTROLLED SENATE/ AN ENLARGED DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN THE
HOUSE/ REVISED COMMITTEE RATIOS/ NEW RULES/ NEW AND OLD
PROBLEMS BEFORE US -- NOT TO MENTION THE ADDED DIMENSION *during*
OF OUR ADMINISTRATION COMING UNDER ATTACK ~~SEVERELY~~ FROM

the past few weeks
~~ALL~~ *so many quarters!!!*

DO WE SEEK TO BE THE COALITION-BUILDERS OF PAST
CONGRESSES?/

ARE WE THE FRONT LINE FOR THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES AND PROGRAMS?

OR ARE WE THE LOYAL OPPOSITION TO THE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITIES IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE?

DO WE HOLD THEIR FEET TO THE FIRE AND FORCE THEM TO FINALLY FULFILL THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP US GOVERN AFTER 6 YEARS OF PARTISANSHIP?

IN SHORT -- DO WE INITIATE POLICY OR REACT TO IT?

AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST / BEING IN THE MINORITY / YET HAVING OUR PRESIDENT IN THE WHITE HOUSE / WE WILL HAVE TO DO SOME OF EACH / WE WILL HAVE TO SET GOALS AND DEVELOP STRATEGY AS EVENTS UNFOLD / WE DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF DEFINING ISSUES / SETTING THE AGENDA / OR SCHEDULING LEGISLATION FAR IN ADVANCE /

WE CANNOT IMPLEMENT UNLESS WE INNOVATE / AND FOR THAT / WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO ANTICIPATE EVENTS LONG BEFORE THEY HAPPEN /

NOR CAN WE IMPLEMENT UNLESS WE STAND TOGETHER A FRESHMAN MEMBER NEEDS NO EXPERIENCE IN THIS BODY ONLY THE ABILITY TO COUNT HEADS TO KNOW THAT WE MUST STAND BOUND TOGETHER IN UNITY IF WE ARE TO AFFECT THE ISSUES SO CRITICAL TO THE NATION, TO OUR PRESIDENT AND TO US

THE NUMBERS ARE NOT ON OUR SIDE OUR SUCCESS MEANS ALL OF US HANGING TOGETHER OR AS BEN FRANKLIN SAID, "ASSUREDLY WE SHALL ALL HANG SEPARATELY."

WHEN WE STAND TOGETHER WE CAN PERSUADE THINKING DEMOCRATS TO JOIN US WHEN WE STAND APART THERE WILL BE NO REASON TO JOIN US HAVING SAID THAT HOWEVER, I KNOW THAT THERE ARE THOSE AMONG US WHO WILL HAVE TO MEET PAROCHIAL INTERESTS BACK HOME ^{and} WE WILL ALWAYS TAKE THAT INTO CONSIDERATION

WITH THE LOSS OF THE SENATE, WE HAVE A NEW AND MORE IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERAL POLICY

IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE HOUSE DEMOCRATS, WITH THE SENATE -- AND, YES, WITH ^{our own} ~~THE~~ ADMINISTRATION -- WE WILL ALWAYS BE WILLING TO LISTEN -- BUT IN THE 100TH CONGRESS WE ALSO INTEND TO BE HEARD AND HEEDED

THE VERY WORST THING WE HOUSE REPUBLICANS CAN DO IN THIS NEW SITUATION IS TO BE PERCEIVED AS HAVING NO FORCEFUL POLICY VIEWS IT IS PRECISELY AT A TIME LIKE THIS, WHEN THE PRESIDENT NEEDS LEADERSHIP ON THE HILL FOR THE VALUES WE SHARE

I PLEDGE TO YOU TODAY THAT SO FAR AS BOB MICHEL IS CONCERNED, HOUSE REPUBLICANS ARE GOING TO BE PROVIDING SUCH LEADERSHIP.

YES, IT'S BEEN NICE HAVING REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP IN THE SENATE.

BUT FROM NOW ON ~~AT LAST~~ WE REPUBLICANS WON'T BE
LOOKING OVER OUR SHOULDER EVERY TIME WE HAVE TO MAKE A
TOUGH CALL IN THE HOUSE / WE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR
OWN DESTINY / WE WON'T HAVE TO WORRY HOW WHAT WE DO / IS
GOING TO AFFECT THE MAJORITY LEADERSHIP IN THE SENATE //

LET ME SAY A WORD ABOUT OUR COMMITTEE WORK AND A
SPECIAL WORD TO OUR RANKING MEMBERS / A FAMOUS SCHOLAR OF
GOVERNMENT* ONCE WROTE THAT "CONGRESS IN SESSION IS
CONGRESS ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION / WHILE CONGRESS IN ITS
COMMITTEE ROOMS / IS CONGRESS AT WORK."

IF WE DON'T MAKE A FIRM, TOUGH, PRINCIPLED STAND IN
COMMITTEE OR SUB-COMMITTEE / WE WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO
LATER MAKE A SUCCESSFUL ~~BIPARTISAN~~ STAND ON THE FLOOR / TO
GAIN BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR OUR VIEWS /

WHAT WE DO IN ~~OUR~~ ^{committees} COMMITTEE, DETERMINES OUR OPTIONS ON
THE FLOOR / GIVE THE BEST YOU CAN GIVE / AT THE
SUB-COMMITTEE AND FULL COMMITTEE LEVEL AND WE'LL PROMISE
TO GIVE YOU THE LEADERSHIP YOU DESERVE. on the floor /

AND THAT BRINGS ME TO THE LEADERSHIP /

*Congratulations
to each.*

TRENT, JACK, DICK, ~~_____~~, GUY, JERRY, AND BOB -- AS
USUAL, I'M GOING TO BE LEANING ON YOU MORE THAN YOU WANT
I'LL BE ASKING YOU TO SHOULDER HEAVIER BURDENS THAN YOU'D
LIKE / I'LL BE RELYING ON YOU FOR COUNSEL AND GUIDANCE
AND SUPPORT.

to you

I'M PROUD OF OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

*and trust the Conference
and the folks likewise.*

IN CONCLUSION I WANT TO USE THE ORCHESTRAL ANALOGY I
USED WHEN YOU FIRST ELECTED ME YOUR LEADER /

YOU VETERANS WILL RECALL THAT I ENVISIONED MYSELF AS
THE DIRECTOR OF THE ORCHESTRA AND THAT I ALSO SAW IN YOU
ALL (A) SOME SOFT & SWEET ^{*mellow voices*} ~~VOCALS~~ IN THE STRING SECTION /
~~(B) SOME VOICES FROM THE CHORUS.~~ (C) SOME ^{*more like*} WOODWINDS,
SOME ^{*like*} BRASS. (D) PERCUSSION AND ^{*even*} CLANGING CYMBALS /

MY JOB WAS PUTTING ^{*it*} ALL TOGETHER TO PROJECT A
HARMONIOUS SOUND /

ONE DAY THIS PAST YEAR ONE OF OUR COLLEAGUES REMEMBERED AND SAID HE ENJOYED PLAYING IN THE ORCHESTRA, BUT ALSO WANTED TO DO SOME OF THE COMPOSING/

THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE I REALIZED I HAD LEFT OUT A VERY IMPORTANT COMPONENT/

WE HAVE INDEED PLAYED JUST ABOUT THE ENTIRE REPERTOIR OF WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAS COMPOSED/ BUT WE OUGHT TO BE ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO GET INVOLVED ~~in the~~ COMPOSING BUSINESS AND THATS EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU/

AND FINALLY, EVER SINCE I'VE BEEN A YOUNG CHILD, I WAS TOLD THAT WHEN YOU LISTEN, YOU MIGHT JUST LEARN SOMETHING/

WELL, IN THE PAST SIX YEARS AS LEADER, I HAVE LISTENED/ I'VE LEARNED ABOUT YOUR HOPES AND, YES, SOMETIMES, YOUR FEARS/ YOUR DREAMS/ AND YOUR SCHEMES/

I'VE BEEN ON THE RECEIVING END OF HEART-FELT DISAGREEMENT/ AS WELL AS HEART-WARMING APPROVAL/

Its been a great experience leading this hearty band of Republicans ~~and~~ these past 6 years.

Unfortunately none of us has ever served in this House as a member of the majority (for me beginning my 31st year)

But hope springs eternal and we have the base here today from which to become a majority party in 1988

BUT WHATEVER YOU HAD TO SAY, I'VE BEEN THERE TO LISTEN, TO WORK WITH YOU, TO SEE IF WE COULD WORK TOGETHER ^{toward} TO A REALIZABLE AND PRINCIPLED CONCLUSION

I'M GOING TO CONTINUE TO DO JUST THAT / WE HAVE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME IN WASHINGTON / I'M GOING TO LEARN FROM AND LISTEN TO YOU SO THAT TOGETHER WE CAN SHOW THE DEMOCRATS HOW THAT NEW GAME IS PLAYED / FOR THE GOOD OF OUR COUNTRY / AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF OUR PARTY /

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