

Vice President Harris Gives Convincing Nomination Acceptance Speech

By Don Sutherland

Vice President Kamala Harris' nomination acceptance speech was outstanding and effective. It will galvanize Democrats, attract independents, and appeal to Reagan Republicans who have been displaced by Donald Trump's transformation of the Republican Party. That transformation has overturned what it once stood for and severed its connections to the values and principles defined by Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan.

Below are the five themes I believe made her address powerful and effective:

- Harris spoke about her personal and family background. She highlighted that she is the daughter of immigrants. Her narrative is one that will resonate with Americans and American history at a time when her opponent and his movement often demonizes immigrants and their contributions to the nation. Crucially, she connected her upbringing to the values and principles that guide her today. Those values and principles include empathy, compassion, justice, equality, and opportunity. Her values and principles drive her determination to make a difference and they shape her vision for the future. In short, her audience now knows who Vice President Harris is.
- Harris reaffirmed her commitment to American democracy in pledging to "hold sacred America's fundamental principles, from the rule of law, to free and fair elections, to the peaceful transfer of power." This promise contrasts with her opponent's having attempted to overturn his defeat in the 2020 election, his continued refusal to commit to accepting the outcome of the 2024 election, and his announced plan to hold a fundraiser for the violent January 6th insurrectionists who were at center of his effort to illegitimately retain power following his 2020 defeat.
- Harris painted a positive vision for the future. In that vision, the Middle Class would prosper, health care and reproductive freedom would be accessible to all, civil liberties would be safeguarded, and every American would be able to pursue opportunities to make better lives for themselves and their families. She contrasted that vision with her opponent's past record, his dismal narrative of a failing America, and his illiberal Project 2025 agenda.
- Harris linked the nation's security to a combination of maintaining a strong military ("peace through strength" in the Reagan formula), sustaining its strategic NATO partnership, and supporting free peoples and democratic nations, including but not limited to Ukraine's fight for survival against an imperialist Russia. Her vision broke decisively from the selfish "America First" neo-isolationism pursued and advocated by

her opponent and his past appeasement of authoritarian Russian and North Korean dictators.

- Harris called for unity. She spoke of a need to "move past the bitterness, cynicism and divisive battles of the past."