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Reverend Al Sharpton
Civil rights leader
Democratic National Convention
Thursday, August 22, 2024
Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good evening. I stand before you as the president of the National Action Network. We do not endorse candidates. We report where candidates stand on criminal justice, economic empowerment, health equity, and other issues.

On one side of this race is Donald Trump, a fellow New Yorker I have known for 40 years. Only once in that time did he take a position on racial issues. He spent a small fortune on full-page ads calling for the execution of five innocent teenagers. You'll hear from them tonight, but I saw then Trump loved to fan the racial flames.

On the other side is a woman I walked with in Selma to commemorate the 59th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. Kamala Harris spoke to me that day about unity and passing bills. All I've ever heard from Donald Trump was how he can get an advantage.

I see one candidate who wants to protect the right to vote, while the other tried to cook up 11,000 votes in Georgia. I see a candidate who, with Joe Biden, brought leaders to the White House to confront violent hatred. Running against a man who said neo-Nazis in Charlottesville were "fine people." I see a candidate who has sought to reform and uphold the law, and a man who wrongly assumes his mugshot appeals to Black Americans.

I have worked with Kamala Harris in every job she's had. She's been consistently committed to making government work for those of us who have been at a disadvantage. All Donald Trump has been consistent about is making himself richer and sowing division to get it done.

This man sat right here in Chicago a few weeks ago, refusing to apologize for claims migrants were taking Black jobs. Well, in November we are going to do a job on those who have done a job on us.

Tonight, we will realize Shirley Chisholm's dream. Fifty-two years after she was told to sit down, I know she is watching as a Black woman stands up to accept the nomination for president of the United States. We fought hard to get a woman out of the kitchen and into the Oval Office. We won't go back. We fought hard for our LGBTQ loved ones to get out of the closet. We won't go back. We fought hard for the right to choose, the right to an education, and the right to vote. We won't go back.

This November, we will go forward to fulfill the promise of a just, fair nation for all. Now I want to bring out the young men I referred to, who were known as the Central Park Five and are now known as the Exonerated Five.

Raymond Santana. Kevin Richardson. Yusef Salaam. Korey Wise.

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