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Description

NBC's David Gregory recaps Barack Obama's historic speech at the Democratic National Convention. Before almost 85,000 people in an outdoor stadium, Obama laid out a blueprint of his policies and issued a challenge to John McCain and the Republicans.

Keywords


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Addressing the DNC: Barack Obama's Call to Arms

MATT LAUER, co-host:

NBC's David Gregory's in Denver with a wrap-up of what he heard last night. David, good morning to you.

DAVID GREGORY reporting:

Good morning, Matt. Accepting the nomination, Barack Obama created a sharp contrast with the Republicans and launched the sharpest attacks yet against President Bush and rival John McCain. Striding on the stage to the cheers of nearly 80,000 supporters at Denver's Invesco Field, Senator Obama stood at the center of an enormous political celebration.

Senator BARACK OBAMA: I accept your nomination for presidency of the United States.

GREGORY: Beneath the stagecraft, however, Obama condemned what he called the broken politics of Washington and failed policies of the Bush administration.

Sen. OBAMA: Tonight I say to the people of America, to Democrats and Republicans and Independents across this great land, enough.

GREGORY: Training his fire on his rival, Obama referenced McCain's voting record in support of President Bush.

Sen. OBAMA: What does it say about your judgment when you think George Bush has been right more than 90 percent of the time?

GREGORY: Obama has seen his lead in the polls erased by the Republican assault on his readiness to be commander in chief.

(Clip from McCain campaign ad)

GREGORY: He used the speech to open a new round of the debate.

Sen. OBAMA: If John McCain wants to have a debate about who has the temperament and judgment to
serve as the next commander in chief, that's a debate I'm ready to have.
GREGORY: Obama accused McCain of stubbornly refusing to end the war in Iraq even as he failed to push for additional resources to win the war in Afghanistan.
Sen. OBAMA: John McCain likes to say that he'll follow bin Laden to the gates of hell, but he won't even follow him to the cave where he lives.
GREGORY: On domestic matters, Obama argued McCain would be an extension of the Bush administration policies on taxes and health care, even as the economy worsens.
Sen. OBAMA: It's not because John McCain doesn't care. It's because John McCain doesn't get it.
GREGORY: Responding to criticism that his call for change lacks specifics, Obama issued a blueprint: Cut taxes for 95 percent of working families, break our dependence on Middle Eastern oil in a decade, end the war in Iraq by a date certain, extend affordable health care to all Americans.
Sen. OBAMA: What the naysayers don't understand is that this election has never been about me. It's about you.
GREGORY: Obama sought to reach those undecided, independent voters, saying he hoped to keep the debate on the big issues rather than personal attacks and questions of patriotism.
Sen. OBAMA: I've got news for you, John McCain, we all put our country first.
GREGORY: As voters tuned in around the country to mark this historic occasion...
Unidentified Woman: I never thought I'd see this day.
GREGORY: ...Senator Obama called on Americans to keep working toward Martin Luther King's dream on this the 45th anniversary of the March on Washington.
Sen. OBAMA: We cannot turn back. We cannot walk alone. At this moment in this election, we must pledge once more to march into the future.
GREGORY: In the end, a family portrait of the new Democratic ticket, prepared for the final sprint to Election Day even as they savored the moment.
For his part, Senator John McCain took the unusual step of releasing an ad congratulating Senator Obama on making history. That was before the address. Afterward, the McCain campaign called the speech misleading. A fuller rebuttal, of course, will come in St. Paul, where the Republicans will gather. But, Matt, there are reports this morning that the convention might actually have to be postponed if Hurricane Gustav ends up hitting the Gulf Coast.
LAUER: All right, we're going to keep an eye on that story, as well. David Gregory in Denver this morning. David, thanks very much.